



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**THE RISE OF PAN-ISLAMISM IN BRITAIN**

by

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December 2006

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**THE RISE OF PAN-ISLAMISM IN BRITAIN**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

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## **ABSTRACT**

Terrorist events in Britain in recent years indicate that some British Muslims do not view their lives through a domestic lens; that is, they do not embrace British norms and values. Instead, they identify with a global Muslim community in a radical way. This thesis explains what is fueling the rise of pan-Islamism in Britain.

For many Muslims, their religious identity is stronger than their British identity because they are alienated from the rest of society. The alienation is generated by poor socioeconomic conditions; and discrimination, racism and Islamophobia. The most important source of alienation, however, is the perception that British foreign policy in Muslim lands is leading to oppression and killing of their Muslim brothers and sisters. Alienation would not necessarily translate into mobilization and action was it not for radical leaders of the domestic Islamist community who were able to exploit protections provided by liberal British laws and traditions. These men inspired the alienated to adopt their pan-Islamist ideology.

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE**

On 7 July 2005 (7/7), the United Kingdom experienced its own September 11. Four radical Islamists, in coordinated suicide attacks, detonated bombs on three subway trains and a double-decker bus. As the dust settled, more than 700 people were injured and fifty-six people, including the terrorists, were killed. This event looked remarkably similar to the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. except for one disturbing difference—the attackers were British citizens. Three of the four terrorists were born in Britain of Pakistani descent and raised in working-class neighborhoods: Mohammad Sidique Khan (age 30), Hasib Mir Hussain (18), and Shehzad Tanweer (22). The fourth bomber was Jamaican-born Germaine Lindsay (20) who acquired his British citizenship at age one.

This act was followed by another four attempted suicide bombings two weeks later on 21 July 2005 (7/21). Essentially mirroring 7/7, the failed plan included three attacks on the subway system and an attack on a double-decker bus. Fortunately for Londoners, this time all of the bomb detonation devices failed. Two of the four alleged perpetrators were British citizens, and all four were British residents. This terror cell was comprised of Muslim men of mixed ethnicity: Muktar Said Ibrahim (age 27, British citizen, Eritrean origin), Hussein Osman (27, British citizen, Ethiopian origin), Ramzi Mohamed (23, British resident, Somali origin), and Yasin Hassan Omar (24, British resident, Somali origin).<sup>1</sup>

The July 2005 events were not the first time British Muslim citizens carried out or attempted to carry out a terrorist attack. “On 30 April 2003, [Asif Mohammed Hanif and Omar Khan Sharif], two middle-class Britons of Pakistani heritage walked into a popular café near the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv. ... Once inside the café, [Hanif] detonated a bomb, killing himself and three bystanders and wounding dozens. [Sharif] fled. It was the first time that a citizen of Britain had committed an act of suicide terrorism in

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<sup>1</sup> Manfo Kwaku Asiedu is often considered a fifth member of the 7/21 terror cell. He allegedly ditched a backpack with explosives on 21 July in a London Park. For this, he was charged with conspiracy to murder and conspiring to cause an explosion. Asiedu, age 32 at the time, is British resident of Ghanaian origin.

Israel.”<sup>2</sup> Finally, like Hanif and Sharif, the infamous American Airlines Flight 63 “shoe bomber,” Richard Reid was born and raised in the United Kingdom.

The thread that binds these stories is the fact that these men, while British citizens or residents, did not view their lives through a domestic lens; that is, they did not embrace British norms and values. Instead, they identified with their oppressed Muslim brothers and sisters in Iraq, Afghanistan, the occupied Palestinian territories, and elsewhere. Identities are multiple and overlapping; however, there is a growing phenomenon of pan-Islamic identification in British Muslim communities that far exceeds any form of British identification.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, while the actions of these British Muslim men may seem irrational to the common Western observer, they are in fact rational reactions taken in the name of their cause and that they hope will weaken the British government.

To varying degrees, Muslim integration, or lack thereof, is an increasingly serious problem for many Western countries, as evidenced by the 2002 “Lackawanna Six”<sup>4</sup> arrests in the U.S., the 2004 Theo van Gogh murder in the Netherlands, and the 2005 riots in the French *banlieues* (suburbs). Furthermore, events in Europe directly impact the United States. Peter Bergen, journalist, terrorism analyst, and fellow of the New America Foundation, explains: “One of the greatest terrorist threats to the U.S. emanates not from domestic sleeper cells or, as popularly imagined, from the graduates of Middle Eastern *madrassah* [traditional schools], but from some of the citizens of its closest ally, Britain.”<sup>5</sup> Under our Visa Waiver Program, people like Mohammad Sidique Khan, Shehzad Tanweer, and Richard Reid—all of whom held a valid British passport—can board a plane for the U.S. without an interview by an American consular official. Because of this, Bergen points out that “future terrorist attacks damaging to the U.S. national security probably will have a strong European connection.”<sup>6</sup> The August 2006

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Bergen, “They Will Strike Again,” *Los Angeles Times*, 12 December 2004.

<sup>3</sup> The idea of a pan-Islamic identity for British Muslims was first presented to me by Professor Zachary Shore. Zachary Shore (Naval Postgraduate School), interview by author, Monterey, California, 26 October 2006. See also Zachary Shore, *Breeding Bin Ladens: America, Islam, and the Future of Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Six Yemeni-Americans convicted of providing material support to al-Qaeda. The men were born American citizens, but of Yemeni descent.

<sup>5</sup> Peter Bergen, “Our Ally, Our Problem,” *New York Times*, 8 July 2005.

<sup>6</sup> Bergen, “They Will Strike Again.”



transatlantic airline terror plot, foiled by London police, was consistent with Bergen's prediction.

Determining why these attacks happened and how to prevent further attacks and loss of life is of critical importance. This thesis will seek to answer the following question: What is fueling the increase of pan-Islamism in Britain that has sometimes led to violent extremism? Uncovering the causes of this dilemma in Britain, by careful study of the British Muslim community, will help to determine a course of action most likely to stop terrorist attacks by British Islamists and will also shed light on the terrorist problem beyond the British Isles.

## **B. WHY THE MUSLIM UNREST IN BRITAIN: EXPLANATIONS VARY**

There is a debate raging as to the reasons for the existence of radical Islam in Britain. Different experts offer differing explanations. Some experts blame the current problems on the failure of the British policy of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism is a system where newcomers are admitted and allowed to "maintain cultural difference and form ethnic communities providing they adhere to the political rules."<sup>7</sup> Where there are too few efforts at assimilation or change, cultural differences between Muslims mainstream Britons have clashed, sometimes resulting in the outbreaks of violence Britain has recently experienced. Other Western nations like Australia, Sweden, and others, have promoted multiculturalism without the domestic Islamic extremism that the British have had. It is difficult to view the failure of multiculturalism as causal in the Muslim case when other minority communities who integrated under the same system did not attack their fellow countrymen. East Asians, both Muslim and Hindu Indians, and Sikhs may not have integrated flawlessly, but they have not turned to extremism for the solution to their problems as some in the Muslim community have.

Other experts point to British foreign policy. The martyrdom videos of two of the four 7/7 bombers make it almost perfectly clear that British foreign policy in Muslim lands is at the heart of their discontent. The political impotence they felt pushed them to one of the most extreme methods to try to influence national politics—suicide terrorism. Still, Prime Minister Tony Blair, in public statements, adamantly asserts that terrorists are

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<sup>7</sup> Stephen Castles and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*, 2nd edition (London: Macmillan Press, 1998), 44.

not attacking Londoners because of opposition to policy in Iraq and elsewhere. Instead he maintains that the terrorists simply hate the West's way of life and want it destroyed.

Another common argument is that injustice at home is fueling the pan-Islamist fires. Studies indicate British Muslims experience racism in the workplace in the schools systems and in nearly every part of British life. On average British Muslims are less educated, earning less, and living less favorable housing conditions than fellow citizens. Here again, though, other minorities face some of the same conditions and yet they are not reacting in the way that a minority of British Muslims are. How could injustice at home then be the root cause of British Muslim militancy when other minorities facing similar circumstance are not reacting in the same way? Why are the Muslim radicals different?

Perhaps Britain is simply too liberal and this allowed the Islamism problem to develop—radical Muslims took advantage of British democratic principles such as freedom of religion and freedom of speech. For instance, Muslim cleric Abu Hamza al-Masri was vehemently anti-West in public displays of pro-jihadi rhetoric, and for ten years he openly preached at the Finsbury Park mosque spreading these messages.<sup>8</sup> Several notorious Muslim radicals are known to have frequented Abu Hamza's Finsbury Park mosque: Zacarias Moussaoui (the twentieth hijacker), Asif Mohammed Hanif, Omar Khan Sharif (mentioned earlier), and James Ujaama.<sup>9</sup> Ujaama was a former Finsbury Park worshiper arrested in the U.S. in 2002 for trying to set up a terrorist training camp in Oregon.<sup>10</sup> Why did it take authorities so long to arrest Abu Hamza and temporarily close down his mosque? Could they not see that what Abu Hamza called freedom of speech and freedom of religion, was also a danger to society?

Another question is how the Egyptian born imam of the Finsbury Park mosque wound up in Britain in the first place. Some writers argue that Britain should never have

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<sup>8</sup> Jalal Ghazi, "'Londonistan' No More—'Peace Pact' Between Brits and Islamists Collapses," *Pacific News Service*, 10 August 2005, [http://news.pacificnews.org/news/view\\_article.html?article\\_id=6d43269e19403587ab992abc428498d5](http://news.pacificnews.org/news/view_article.html?article_id=6d43269e19403587ab992abc428498d5) (accessed December 2005).

<sup>9</sup> Irwin M. Stelzer, "Letter from Londonistan," *The Weekly Standard*, 1 August 2005, 24; and Ishara Bhasi, "Paying a Heavy Price," *India Today*, 25 July 2005, 48.

<sup>10</sup> Daniella Peled, "Hooked on Abu Hamza," *The Jerusalem Report*, 12 July 2004, 26.

allowed asylum seekers known to have links to radical organizations immigrate. If immigrants became radicalized after they immigrated, why were they allowed to remain in Britain? Once Abu Hamza was found to be a danger, critics say that Britain should have sent him back to his native Egypt or Yemen where he is wanted for crimes allegedly committed there.

The argument is that pan-Islamism flourished because Britain was too liberal with its asylum and immigration laws and too strict with its deportation criteria. Britain did not comply with extradition requests from Libya, France, Egypt, Yemen, and others. For this stance London was sardonically renamed “Londonistan.” Why did British authorities allow this state of affairs to develop? No matter what the reasons, because of Britain’s acceptance or tolerance of known radicals, they were sitting on a ticking time bomb.

It is evident that the spread of pan-Islamism was not the result of one or two problems. The issue is complex and many-sided. Some observers try to boil the problem down to a succinct conclusion. For example, a July 2005 Congressional Research Service Report to Congress summed up the problem in this way:

The failure of European governments to fully integrate Muslim communities into mainstream society leaves some European Muslims more vulnerable to extremist ideologies. [Young Muslim men] feel disenfranchised in a society that does not fully accept them; they appear to turn to Islam as a badge of cultural identity, and are then radicalized by extremist Muslim clerics.<sup>11</sup>

This is a good argument, but the foreign policy component is missing. In a second example, Fawaz Gerges, Christian A. Johnson Chairholder in International Affairs and Middle East Studies at Sarah Lawrence College, provides another succinct explanation of the British problem, adding the foreign policy ingredient:

Hideous as they were, the ... London attacks must be understood within this ideologically fertile soil that attracts your uprooted men, some of whom are second-generation European Muslims, to militant causes; in their eyes, their imagined *ummah* is besieged and under threat. Foreign policy grievances, coupled with social and cultural, as opposed to purely economic, marginalization supply the fuel that ignites terrorist activities worldwide.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Kristin Archick, John Rollins, and Steven Woehrel, *Islamist Extremism in Europe (RS22211)*—CRS Report for Congress (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 29 July 2005), 3.

<sup>12</sup> Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 242.

Gerges hits on the domestic alienation problem with social and cultural ills like discrimination and racism and well as the economic ingredient like high unemployment and lower standards of living, but he does not identify the catalyzing ingredient. Who is or what is the mobilizing component who takes all this injustice and turns it into action? What is generally missing from the literature is how the components are linked together. What is needed is a step-by-step discussion of all the sources of alienation and how that alienation and anger is transformed into action like the 7/7 bombings. The purpose of this thesis is to begin such a discussion.

### **C. METHODOLOGY AND OVERVIEW**

Britain sat at the eye of a storm. The three components of the storm are visually depicted in the Venn diagram below.

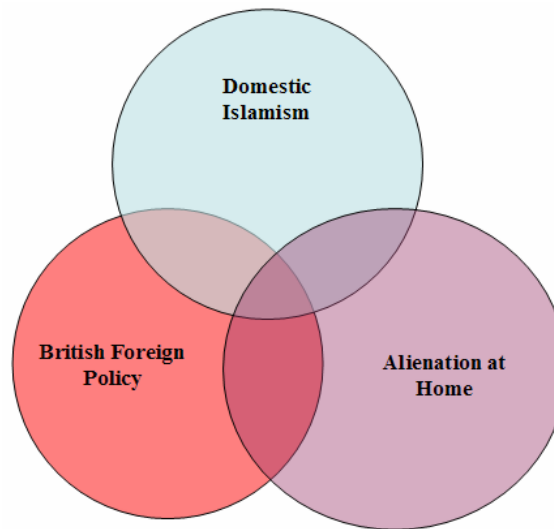


Figure 1. Pan-Islamism in Britain: Causal Factors

With the three components in mind, the answer to the question of what is fueling the rise of pan-Islamism in Britain follows:

A minority, but sizeable number of British Muslims identify themselves first as Muslims before they are Britons. Because they see themselves in this light, they are upset about British foreign policy in Muslim lands, which they think equates to the killing of thousands of innocent Muslims, including women and children, in Iraq, Palestine, Chechnya, Bosnia, Kashmir, and Afghanistan. They lack a British identity because they are not embracing the possibility of a dual identity as Muslim and British.

Even if they do accept that they have a dual identity, their Muslim identity is stronger. Their Muslim identity is stronger because they are alienated and not integrated or assimilated. They are alienated and not integrated because they suffer from poor socioeconomic conditions: high unemployment, low paying jobs, high economic inactivity, and more. They also perceive religious discrimination and racism in the U.K. This dissatisfaction would probably not translate into acts of terrorism, support for terrorism, and promotion of terrorism were it not for the radicals present in country. These radical Islamists operated under the protection of freedom of speech and religion. Radicals gave the alienated Muslims the tools to turn their frustration into action. Some cases, however, do not fit this mold. Some alienated and unhappy young men have been drawn to terrorism on their own, without the help of the radicals. An affinity for the al-Qaeda inspired global jihad ideology can occur via the internet, or from visits to foreign lands, or through friends or chance encounters that provide a new recruit with the same tools and solutions espoused by the radical leaders in the U.K. While radical imams are only one of several ways that an alienated or disenfranchised young Muslim can be led into extremism, in the late 1990s and the early 2000s, radical domestic Islamists were the primary catalysts for the outburst of terrorism in Britain.

The hypothesis is defended in three chapters that lead up to the concluding chapter containing policy recommendations. The next chapter describes domestic Islamism first by telling the stories of three of the most radical Islamist leaders in the U.K. Then the broader problem with Islamism throughout the British Muslim community is considered. A discussion follows about the laws and traditions in Britain that allowed radical jihadist ideologies to be promulgated in the British Muslim community. The targets of the radicals, typically British Muslim men in their twenties, may not have been attracted to the ideologies espoused by British radicals had they not been alienated from British society. Chapter three identifies six sources of this alienation. It also offers reasons why a jihadist ideology is appealing to some British Muslims. The strongest source of this alienation is British foreign policy. While this topic is touched on the chapter three, it is more fully discussed in chapter four. Finally, chapter five offers some broad solutions to the social crisis and unrest in Britain.

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## II. DOMESTIC ISLAMISM

### A. INTRODUCTION OF ARGUMENT

Radicals from abroad who have come to the U.K. legally and illegally, temporarily or long-term, have turned some alienated and disenfranchised youths into fellow radicals. There are various locales where radicals mobilize, socialize, and speak to alienated youths searching for identity. As mentioned in chapter one, the places can include not only mosques, but also less formal meeting places such as bookstores, gymnasiums, backrooms, garages, basements, prisons, and universities.<sup>13</sup> At these gathering places, new recruits are engaged in discussion led by radical leaders, in an effort to “catalyze initial interest”<sup>14</sup> in a new ideology and convert them to combative, radical Islamists. Without radicals from abroad, the alienated and disenfranchised Muslims would not be as likely to take the step from mere alienation from British society to a combative, anti-West, pro-radical Islamist stance.

Radicals proselytizing in the U.K. have been able to do so for three reasons. First, liberal asylum and immigration laws have attracted Islamic radicals from abroad who take advantage of the openness of British society (as opposed to much more closed states characteristic of the Middle East, the Maghreb, and South Asia) to preach radical messages to alienated young Muslim men. Once in Britain, deportation or extradition is difficult for a variety of reasons. Second, because Britain is an open and free society, individuals and Islamic civic, political, and religious organizations and institutions are protected by strong democratic traditions of free speech and freedom of religion. Third, British authorities were sometimes aware of what the radicals were doing, but chose not to arrest or otherwise infringe on their activities for reasons that seem controversial today.

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<sup>13</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Home Office, *Young Muslims and Extremism*, April 2004, 2, 12, 14, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/report/2004/muslimext-uk.htm#ymae> (accessed November 2006); Home Office, *Report of the Official Account of the Bombings in London on 7th July 2005* (London: The Stationary Office, 11 May 2006), 15-17, 24; and Matthew Chebatoris (civilian terrorism analyst, Joint Analysis Center, U.S. European Command—Royal Air Force Molesworth, U.K.), interview by author, Monterey, California, 2 October 2006.

<sup>14</sup> Quintan Wiktorowicz, *Radical Islam Rising: Muslim Extremism in the West* (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2005), 5.

This chapter will first tell the stories of three radical Muslim leaders—how they arrived in the U.K. and what they have said and done while living in Britain. Second, the widespread nature of the problem is discussed. Third is a discussion of whether or not laws protecting freedom of speech and freedom of religion are too liberal in Britain and if changes to British immigration, asylum, deportation, and extradition laws are needed. Finally, why British authorities knew of Islamic extremism in their country, yet chose to look the other way, is examined.

## **B. SUPPORTING EVIDENCE**

### **1. Three Radical Leaders**

The three men profiled were chosen because they are extremists and have been linked to terrorists. Furthermore, the story of each man demonstrates flaws or holes in the British approach to dealing with Islamic fanaticism. For example, there were problems in the way British authorities dealt with the Muslim community's need for spiritual leaders. Imams from abroad were recruited by local mosque councils and immigration officials provided little quality control over the type of cleric that was entering the country. Also, there are problems with immigration and asylum laws and procedures—laws are either not enforced or are too liberal to begin with. Last, there are difficulties in deporting or extraditing individuals who are dangerous to the community. Since at least the year 2000, the British government has been trying to patch these holes. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, many radicals took advantage of the leniency of British policies.

In the case of each of these men it now appears there were issues with British traditions of free speech and freedom of religion. The incendiary rhetoric preached by these men was a threat to the public and yet it was not stopped until they had gone too far. Politicians finally decided that there must be limits to what someone can say and do, even in a religious context. The men in this study are Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Mohammad, and Abu Hamza al-Masri.





Figure 2. Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Mohammad, Abu Hamza al-Masri

*a. Abdullah al-Faisal*

Abdullah al-Faisal is of particular interest because of his link to 7/7 bombers Germaine Lindsay and Mohammad Sidique Khan. Britain's Home Office in its official report of the London Bombings stated that Lindsay "was strongly influenced by the extremist preacher Abdullah al-Faisal (also of Jamaican origin). ... Lindsay is believed to have attended at least one lecture and to have listened to tapes of other lectures by him."<sup>15</sup>

Mohammad Sidique Khan was known to have attended the al-Madina Masjid mosque in Beeston, England, where al-Faisal recruited and lectured. An imam at the mosque, Hamid Ali, revealed to an undercover investigative reporter "that the leader of the London suicide bombers [Khan] had attended sermons in Yorkshire by al-Faisal." Ali described "the [7/7] bombers as the 'children' of 'Sheikh' al-Faisal and part of his group of followers, the imam [Ali] disclosed that al-Faisal had visited the Beeston mosque at least three times to give 'lectures'." Ali further explained that "Khan had many of his [al-Faisal's] audio tapes." Ali said, "He had lots of them [tapes]. He definitely used to listen to al-Faisal tapes. I borrowed some from him." Lastly, Ali "recalled Khan asking al-Faisal many questions during one of these lectures."<sup>16</sup>

Imam Abdullah al-Faisal's radical message was summarized by Lord Justice of Appeal, Sir Mark Howard Potter, as he explained in general terms the wrongdoings of al-Faisal in the court appeal summary:

<sup>15</sup> Home Office, *Report of the Official Account of the Bombings in London on 7th July 2005*, 18.

<sup>16</sup> "British Imam Praises London Tube Bombers," *The Sunday Times*, 12 Feb 2006, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-2036538,00.html> (accessed December 2006).

At a number of public meetings, the appellant [al-Faisal] addressed audiences of predominantly young Muslim males about Islam and the way in which Muslims should conduct their lives. Some of these meetings were recorded on tape and the tapes were distributed to a number of specialist bookshops. ... In his speeches, the appellant encouraged his listeners to kill. He encouraged them to wage Jihad against the enemies of Islam as he deemed them to be.<sup>17</sup>

Waging jihad meant to kill *kafirs* (nonbelievers, infidels) and al-Faisal defined the *kafirs* as primarily Americans, Hindus, and Jews. His audio tapes were distributed to fifteen Islamic bookstores in England for sale to the public. The tapes that led to his conviction were titled “Jihad DAT,” “Jihad,” “Declaration of War,” “No Peace with the Jews,” and “Jewish Traits.” The following are a few of his most threatening and incendiary comments from two of his audio tapes. From “Jihad DAT:”

The Jihad of a woman is to bring up her male children with a Jihad mentality. Is that clear? So when you buy toys for your boys you buy tanks and guns [laughter]. Helicopter gun ships and so forth. This is the Jihad of a woman, to bring up her sons with a Jihad mentality not to be wimps but to be Mojahedeen. And whenever you are a Muslim boy and you are 15 you are a soldier automatically. So all of you, sitting down in front of me are soldiers. Is it sensible for you to be a soldier and you don't know how to shoot a Kalashnikov? A soldier who doesn't know how to shoot therefore Jihad training is compulsory on all of you.<sup>18</sup>

In a second tape titled “Jihad,” al-Faisal is similarly ruthless and brutal towards anyone other than people of the Muslim faith:

You need to wage Jihad to repel the aggression of NATO, the UN, the USA, [and] the UK, only with Jihad we can repel the aggression so don't entertain the idea of voting. Our methodology is the bullet not the ballot.

Is there any peace treaty between us and Hindus and Indian? No, so you can go to India and if you see a Hindu walking down the road you are allowed to kill him and take his money, is that clear, because there is no peace treaty between us and him his wealth isn't sacred nor his life because there is no peace treaty between us and him.

Those who want to go to Jenna paradise it's easy just kill a Kaffar unbeliever. By killing that Kaffar unbeliever you have purchased your ticket to paradise.

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<sup>17</sup> Lord Justice Potter, *Royal Courts of Justice: Appellate Review of Case No. 2003-01860-C2* (London: Crown Prosecution Service, 4 March 2004), <http://www.hmcourts-service.gov.uk/judgmentsfiles/j2352/regina-v-el-faisal.htm> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

The sixth aim and objective of Jihad is to spread terrorism. To terrorise the unbelievers. If terror didn't work Allah wouldn't have commanded you to terrorise the unbelievers and the best way to terrorise them is to exterminate them with Jihad.

Because of the evidence, including what he said on his tapes, he was convicted of (1) soliciting to murder, (2) using threatening, abusive, or insulting words or behavior with intent to stir up racial hatred, and (3) distributing threatening, abusive, or insulting recordings of sound with intent to stir up racial hatred. His appeal was dismissed.<sup>19</sup>

Al-Faisal "came into contact with other prominent extremists. He is a close ally of the radical cleric Abu Hamza" (discussed below). Al-Faisal is also "alleged to have been close to Earnest James Ujaama (described in introduction), who was jailed in America for two years after confessing his role in setting up an al-Qaeda training camp, allegedly with Abu Hamza, in Oregon. Like [7/7 bomber] Khan, Ujaama asked questions at al-Faisal's lectures in Britain."<sup>20</sup> Al-Faisal was the imam of the Brixton mosque in south London. Both Richard Reid and Zacarias Moussaoui attended the Brixton mosque<sup>21</sup> and are "believed to attended [al-Faisal's] lectures."<sup>22</sup> The link with these two men is not as direct as to 7/7 bombers Khan and Lindsey, but worth mentioning.

How did such an extremist wind up in Britain? This radical imam was born in Jamaica and left there at age 16 after converting to Islam. Immediately after his conversion, he became a dedicated religious student. He spent one year in Guyana, South America, and a full eight years of study in Saudi Arabia at the Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud University.<sup>23</sup> After graduating in 1991, he went to Britain to help with the shortage

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<sup>19</sup> Lord Justice Potter, *Royal Courts of Justice: Appellate Review of Case No. 2003-01860-C2*.

<sup>20</sup> "British Imam Praises London Tube Bombers," *The Sunday Times*, 12 Feb 2006, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-2036538,00.html> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>21</sup> "UK Islam: Faces of Fanaticism Part Two," *Western Resistance*, 14 February 2006, <http://www.westernresistance.com/blog/archives/001652.html> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>22</sup> Jamie Doward, "Cleric Who Urged Jihad to be Freed from Prison," *The Observer*, 20 August 2006, [http://observer.guardian.co.uk/uk\\_news/story/0,,1854346,00.html](http://observer.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,,1854346,00.html) (accessed December 2006).

<sup>23</sup> This biographical information about al-Faisal is posted on an Arabic website ([www.mostmerciful.com](http://www.mostmerciful.com)). The website has the biographies of many Islamist authors and also provides links where books by these authors can be purchased. See "Shaikh Abdullah Faisal" at <http://www.mostmerciful.com/al-albaani.htm> (accessed December 2006).

of imams in country and soon thereafter, “he became the imam of the Brixton mosque” in south London.<sup>24</sup> Imams from abroad are not an uncommon occurrence as British born imams are hard to come by. To meet the spiritual needs of the community, imams from abroad are easily afforded visas to teach and preach in Britain. This problem is explained further in section two below.

**b. Omar Bakri Muhammad**

Omar Bakri Muhammad was born in Syria in 1958 and is a Muslim cleric. His interest in Islamist organizations started at an early age. At age 15 he joined the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria. In 1977, he fled Syria for Beirut and joined Hizb ut-Tahrir (HT), an organization which “is devoted to the establishment of an Islamic state (the caliphate) through a military coup.” In 1979 he moved to Saudi Arabia and spent the early 1980’s recruiting activists for the Saudi branch of HT activists in spite of the fact that HT “was banned and [its] activism [was] severely repressed” by the Saudi monarchy. In 1983 Bakri Mohammad founded al-Muhajiroun (the Emigrants) as a cover organization for the illegal HT. In 1985 Bakri Mohammad was deported from Saudi Arabia for his extremism and took refuge in Britain. Upon arrival in the U.K., Bakri Mohammad formed the British branch of HT. Bakri’s activism was extreme. For this and other reasons, in late 1995 Bakri Mohammad was expelled from HT by the worldwide emir of the organization, Abdul Qadeem Zalloum.<sup>25</sup>

Months later Bakri Mohammad re-launched al-Muhajiroun, this time in the U.K. This new organization “adopted most of HT’s ideology” with some important differences. Most noteworthy is the al-Muhajiroun aim that “Muslims in the United Kingdom must struggle to establish an Islamic state in Britain.”<sup>26</sup> HT seeks only to reestablish the caliphate in “particular countries and areas of the world where success is most likely” and Britain does not fit this bill. Bakri’s organization holds annual celebrations to honor the “magnificent martyrs” or the “magnificent 19” who carried out the 9/11 attacks.<sup>27</sup> In a one-on-one interview with journalist Anthony McRoy, Bakri

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<sup>24</sup> “UK Islam: Faces of Fanaticism Part Two,” *Western Resistance*, 14 February 2006, <http://www.westernresistance.com/blog/archives/001652.html> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>25</sup> Wiktorowicz, *Radical Islam Rising*, 7-10, for all of the information in this paragraph.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>27</sup> Alan Cowell, “Britain: Taunts Follow Crackdown,” *New York Times*, 14 August 2005.

Mohammad clearly indicated his contempt for the non-Muslims and international laws of war. Regarding the war in Iraq, Bakri Mohammad said “it is *halal* [lawful, permitted by shari’a law] to kill hostages in a war zone.”<sup>28</sup> By hostages he means civilian hostages like contractors or journalists—he is not just considering captured soldiers. There is a twisted *hadith* (quotations from the Prophet Muhammad) on his website that says the final hour will not come until Muslims conquer the White House. He does qualify this statement by saying that this only will come realistically via Islamic missionary activity; however, his point is that there will be no end to jihad until Islam and Islamic law rule the world.<sup>29</sup> A final quote by Bakri Mohammad clearly demonstrates his intolerance of non-Muslims: “We don’t make a distinction between civilians and non-civilians, innocents and non-innocents. Only between Muslims and unbelievers. And the life of an unbeliever has no value. It has no sanctity.”<sup>30</sup>

Scotland Yard has been investigating Bakri Mohammad since at least January 2005 suspecting that he has been inciting Muslim youth to join the insurgency in Iraq.<sup>31</sup> Regarding the 7/7 attacks, like most radical Islamists, Bakri Mohammad blamed mainstream British Muslim and British voters for the bombings. Voters are to blame because they returned Prime Minister Blair to power in the May 2005 elections.<sup>32</sup> After the 7/7 terrorist attacks, Bakri Mohammad fled to Lebanon and was reported by Asharq Alawsat (a pan-Arab daily newspaper published in London) on 30 August 2005 to be hiding out in Beirut.<sup>33</sup>

In the mid- to late-1990s, al-Muhajiroun’s powerful and hateful anti-West rhetoric brought it under suspicion of the British authorities. One of the two British

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<sup>28</sup> Anthony McRoy, “There Can Be No End to Jihad,” *Christianity Today*, 31 January 2005, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2005/105/22.0.html> (accessed December 2005).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> *Reuters* “Attack on London ‘Inevitable’,” *The Age*, 19 April, 2004, <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2004/04/19/1082326119414.html?from=storyrhs&oneclick=true#> (accessed May 2006).

<sup>31</sup> McRoy, “There Can Be No End to Jihad.”

<sup>32</sup> Alan Cowell, “Britain and Jordan Agree on Expulsion of Terror Suspects,” *New York Times*, 21 July 2005, late edition; and Alan Cowell, “Seeking Moderate Support, Blair Meets Muslims Leaders,” *New York Times*, 20 July 2005, late edition.

<sup>33</sup> Sanaa al-Jack, “Interview with Notorious Fundamentalist Omar Bakri,” *Asharq Alawsat*, 30 August 2005, <http://www.asharqalawsat.com/english/news.asp?id=1464&section=3> (accessed December 2005).

suicide bombers who attacked a Tel Aviv café in 2003 had attended al-Muhajiroun meetings. In the latter part of 2004, Bakri Mohammad issued a statement officially dissolving al-Muhajiroun to avoid being prosecuted under British incitement laws.<sup>34</sup> Prior to the disbandment, Bakri Mohammad claimed that al-Muhajiroun was the fastest growing group among Muslim youth.<sup>35</sup> Authorities now say that al-Muhajiroun may have simply been renamed as Ahl us-Sunnah wal Jamaah or the Saved Sect.<sup>36</sup> The Saved Sect's website clearly shows how dangerous this organization may be to Western governments and their non-Muslim citizens.<sup>37</sup>

*c. Abu Hamza al-Masri*

Muslim cleric Abu Hamza al-Masri is equally anti-West. For six years he led prayers and preached at the Finsbury Park mosque in London, spreading pro-Islam and anti-West messages. He asserted that the 9/11 attacks were a Jewish plot and has repeatedly called for his followers to become martyrs on their own doorstep (meaning in Britain).<sup>38</sup> He has publicly hailed Osama bin Laden as a liberator of the Middle East and regularly calls for a jihad against the West.<sup>39</sup> Under Abu Hamza's guide, the Finsbury Park mosque became a center of Islamic militancy. Quintan Wiktorowicz, Assistant Professor of International Studies at Rhodes College, describes this militancy: "The Finsbury Park mosque in London is a notorious center of support for radical Islamic groups aligned with al-Qaeda, including the Egyptian Islamic Group, the Algerian Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat (GSPC), and the Algerian Armed Islamic

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<sup>34</sup> McRoy, "There Can Be No End to Jihad." See also Peled, "Hooked on Abu Hamza."

<sup>35</sup> Peled, "Hooked on Abu Hamza."

<sup>36</sup> McRoy, "There Can Be No End to Jihad"; and Cowell, "Britain: Taunts Follow Crackdown."

<sup>37</sup> Quoted from the Saved Sect's website where they explain how they plan to conquer the world: "So how will Islam dominate the world? Most likely by force! If the people do not embrace Islam and implement the Sharee'ah on their own accord, it becomes an obligation upon the Muslims to fight and implement Islam. In countries such as Britain and America, their people have clearly rejected to embrace Islam and will never choose to live by the Sharee'ah. Therefore, the only two ways in which these countries can become under the domain of Islam is by the last two options, a group of Muslims rise and overthrow the government, or an Islamic state is established elsewhere and comes to conquer these nations." See the Saved Sect, "How Islam will Dominate the World," 2005, <http://www.thesavedsect.com/articles/Jihaad/IslamDominate.htm> (accessed December 2005).

<sup>38</sup> Peled, "Hooked on Abu Hamza."

<sup>39</sup> Editorial, "New British Tack on Terror: Raid on Mosque Demonstrates a Tougher Attitude," *Los Angeles Times*, 22 January 2003.

Group (GIA).”<sup>40</sup> For this and other reasons, the mosque was raided by British authorities and subsequently closed down in January 2003.<sup>41</sup>

Five terrorists mentioned earlier are former associates of Abu Hamza: Zacarias Moussaoui, Richard Reid, Asif Mohammed Hanif, Omar Khan Sharif, and Earnest James Ujaama.<sup>42</sup> In addition, four of the five 7/21 bombers were associated with the Finsbury Park mosque. “Press releases from the Metropolitan Police and court services” say that Muktar Said Ibrahim and Yassin Hassan Omar “are believed to have attended” the mosque. Manfo Kwaku Asiedu was actually living in the mosque in July 2005. After the Finsbury Park mosque was closed down in January 2003, Hussein Osman was part of a roughly 50 person gang who attempted a hostile takeover of the Stockwell mosque in south London as a new home for Abu Hamza (explained in greater detail in section two below).<sup>43</sup>

Abu Hamza is different from the other two imams in that he was not drawn to the U.K. after he was radicalized, but was actually radicalized after immigrating to Britain. For the first part of his life in Britain he was secular, westernized, and far from being a radical Islamic fundamentalist.<sup>44</sup> Born in Egypt in 1958 as Mustafa Kamel Mustafa, he came to Britain in 1979 on a one-month visitor’s visa. Abu Hamza’s goal was British citizenship and the prospect of a better life with more opportunity than he had in Egypt. He said that in the early 1980s he was not a very good Muslim. After an extramarital affair, it was then that Abu Hamza returned to Islam. With God’s help he promised not to cheat on his wife again. The marriage to his wife failed, but not his commitment to Islam.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Wiktorowicz, *Radical Islam Rising*, 3.

<sup>41</sup> The mosque was reopened February 2005.

<sup>42</sup> Stelzer, “Letter from Londonistan”; Bhasi, “Paying a Heavy Price”; and Cahal Milmo, “Hamza: Panto Villain, Political Pawn, or Key Terrorist Player,” *Belfast Telegraph*, 8 February 2006, <http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/story.jsp?story=678546> (accessed February 2006).

<sup>43</sup> Paul Tumelty, “Reassessing the July 21 London Bombings,” *Terrorism Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation), III, no. 17 (8 September 2005): 2.

<sup>44</sup> Sean O’Neill and Daniel McGrory, “Bigamy, Fraud, Deceit: How Abu Hamza Became a British Citizen,” *The Times*, 30 May 2006, [http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,29389-2202004\\_1,00.html](http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,29389-2202004_1,00.html) (accessed December 2006). This article is an extract from Sean O’Neill’s and Daniel McGrory’s book *The Suicide Factory: Abu Hamza and the Finsbury Park Mosque*.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

On a pilgrimage to Mecca he met Sheikh Abdualh Azzam, “founder of the Afghan Mujahideen”<sup>46</sup> and soon to be mentor of not only Abu Hamza but also Osama bin Laden. Next he changed his name to Abu Hamza al-Masri and over the course of several years traveled he traveled to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bosnia to support Muslims. As mentioned earlier, by the early 1990s Abu Hamza was “a leading figure in the British Islamist scene”<sup>47</sup> and even founded his own political Islamist organization, the Supporter’s of the Shari’a. Like al-Muhajiroun and Hizb ut-Tahrir, his organization strove to re-establish the Caliphate, but also served as “the propagandists of the Algerian GIA (Groupe Islamique Arm) in Europe.”<sup>48</sup>

By the late 1990s Abu Hamza was the leader of the Finsbury Park Mosque.<sup>49</sup> A police raid on the mosque confirmed his radicalization. Police discovered “several dozen forged and stolen passports, credit cards and driving licenses” as well as “chemical warfare suits, blank-firing pistols, knives, and handcuffs.”<sup>50</sup> On 19 October 2004, Abu Hamza was arrested in Britain and charged with 16 crimes, including: “using public meetings to incite his followers to kill non-Muslims” and “intent to stir up racial hatred.”<sup>51</sup> British courts in February 2006 found him guilty of 11 charges including soliciting to murder and stirring up racial hatred.<sup>52</sup>

These three men underscore problems with British laws and traditions: authorities did little screening of imams from abroad who filled much needed clerical leadership positions at local mosques, immigration and asylum laws were too liberal, and

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<sup>46</sup> Dominic Casciani, “Profile: Abu Hamza,” *BBC News*, 27 May 2004, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk\\_news/3752517.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/3752517.stm) (accessed December 2006).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Stephen Ulph, “Londonistan,” *Terrorism Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation), I, no. 12 (25 Feb 2004): 3. In early 2004, Supporters of the Shari’a was estimated to have 200 members.

<sup>49</sup> Casciani, “Profile: Abu Hamza.”

<sup>50</sup> Milmo, “Hamza: Panto Villain, Political Pawn, or Key Terrorist Player.”

<sup>51</sup> *Reuters*, “Abu Hamza in Court,” *Tiscali News*, 26 October 2006, <http://www.tiscali.co.uk/news/newswire.php/news/reuters/2004/10/26/topnews/abuhamzaincourt.html> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>52</sup> “Hamza Guilty of Inciting Murder,” *BBC News*, 7 February 2006, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/4689556.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4689556.stm) (accessed December 2006). Abu Hamza is also wanted in the U.S. for the following charges: involvement with Earnest James Ujaama, providing support and finance to al Qaeda cells, attempting to set up jihad training camps in Afghanistan, and his involvement in a 1998 hostage crisis in Yemen (for this he is also wanted by Yemeni authorities). Peled, “Hooked on Abu Hamza.”



strong traditions of freedom of religion and freedom of speech protected radicals. The laws and traditions were changing rapidly in the early 2000s, which led to the arrest of Abdullah al-Faisal and Abu Hamza al-Masri and the flight of Omar Bakri Mohammad. This is not to say the problem has been solved. The seeds of Islamic radicalism were sewn by leading men like these three, but they are not isolated individuals; they are part of a broader problem in the U.K.

## **2. The Larger Problem Throughout the U.K.**

According to the latest census (2001), there are officially 1.6 million Muslims in the U.K.,<sup>53</sup> but if “undocumented and asylum seeking Muslims” are added, the number may be as high as two million.<sup>54</sup> For the purpose of this argument we will use two million. How many of the two million Muslims are radical and a threat to society?

The French domestic intelligence service, *les Renseignements Généraux*, has developed a formula for determining the number of Islamic radicals in their state. They say that “five percent of [their] population would be considered “fundamentalists.”<sup>55</sup> Of that five percent, “three percent could be considered dangerous.”<sup>56</sup> Applying that formula to Britain there would be 100,000 fundamentalists and 3,000 of them would be considered dangerous. The application of the French formula to the British population is problematical, but can serve as a rough guide.

It is instructive to look at the membership numbers of some of Britain’s known Islamist organizations. After extensive research, Quintan Wiktorowicz claims that al-Muhajiroun is “the most visible Islamic movement in the United Kingdom.” In his book he says that in al-Muhajiroun there are 160 formal members, 700 “followers,” and approximately 7,000 “contacts.” Followers are those who take “weekly religious

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<sup>53</sup> Office for National Statistics, “Census 2001, Profiles,” <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/profiles/uk.asp> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>54</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK: Policies for Engaged Citizens* (New York: Open Society Institute, 2005), 12f.

<sup>55</sup> In this article, the author uses fundamentalist and Islamist interchangeably, meaning someone with radical ideology.

<sup>56</sup> Claude Moniquet, “The Radicalization of Muslim Youth in Europe: The Reality and Scale of the Threat,” (paper presented at U.S. House of Representatives hearing of the Committee on International Relations, 27 April 2005), 3, <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/congress/mon042705.pdf> (accessed December 2006).

lessons” with the movement’s leaders and contacts are “potential participants who are considering participation in lessons and events.”<sup>57</sup>

The next logical Islamist group to investigate is Hizb ut-Tahrir. Unfortunately, estimating membership in the U.K. branch of that international organization has proven difficult. Wiktorowicz says that regarding formal membership, HT is probably larger, but admits formal numbers are not available.<sup>58</sup> The British Broadcasting Company (BBC) in their report on HT, ran into the same uncertainty as to the number of members. While the leadership of the organization is acknowledged and vocal, the BBC could only say “membership is thought to be relatively small by political party standards, but certainly well organised, particularly among students who have been attracted to its ranks.”<sup>59</sup>

Regarding other Islamist organizations, unclassified estimates of numbers of members are few and far between, especially since the enactment of Terrorism Act 2006 which outlawed any organization that “glorifies terrorism.” Since then, those involved in many movements have gone underground to avoid arousing suspicion from the authorities.

One way to consider how many radical leaders are out there would be to determine how many imams there are in Britain. Estimates place the number of mosques at 1,600<sup>60</sup> and the number of imams at 2,000.<sup>61</sup> There are no estimates on the number of “radical” imams, but perhaps there are lessons to be learned from looking at the imams on the whole. The first factor to consider is that most imams are trained abroad because the significant number of Muslims in Britain is a relatively new phenomenon (post-WWII) and the most respected schools for imam training are in the Middle East and South Asia. In the past, immigration officials did not deny visa applications very often

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<sup>57</sup> Wiktorowicz, *Radical Islam Rising*, 10.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> “Q&A: Hizb ut-Tahrir,” *BBC News*, 6 August 2005, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/4127688.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4127688.stm) (accessed December 2006).

<sup>60</sup> Jytte Klausen, “Counterterrorism and the Integration of Islam in Europe,” *Watch on the West* (Foreign Policy Research Institute), 7, no. 7 (July 2006), <http://www.fpri.org/ww/0701.200607.klausen.integrationislameurope.html> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>61</sup> Jytte Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge: Politics and Religion in Western Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 114.

because of the shortage of Muslim religious leaders. “So long as [the] mosque council” could guarantee “that it would provide an income for the imam, ... work permits [were] not generally ... a problem.”<sup>62</sup> Because of these reasons, less than 10 percent of imams received their religious training in the U.K.<sup>63</sup>

Why is training from abroad a problem? There are at least two reasons. The first reason was reported by a “leader of a mosque association representing one-third of Britain’s mosques.” He “reported that 80 percent of his association’s imams were ill-prepared to cope with the demands made upon them by the members of the mosque communities and by local governments and other civic groups.”<sup>64</sup> What does ill-prepared mean? Because imams came from abroad, “they have no real knowledge of the societies in which their followers live” and may not even speak English.<sup>65</sup> Imams unfamiliar with the British society that they are living in are of little help the youth in their congregation facing identity or alienation issues. Therefore, “many European Muslims reject these clerics.”<sup>66</sup> Because the youth have rejected the traditional imams, radical clerics like Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Mohammad, and Abu Hamza al-Masri are able to take advantage of the situation “to advocate a radical Islam and to attack western values, or European and U.S. policy which they denounce as anti-Muslim or pro-Zionist.”<sup>67</sup>

British government reports reveal some relevant statistics as to how many Islamist radicals exist in the U.K. One report estimated 10-15,000 British Muslims are supporters of al Qaeda or related groups<sup>68</sup> and another said that 10,000 people attended a single Hizb ut-Tahrir conference in Britain in 2004.<sup>69</sup> Looking deeper, for those who are more than just conference “attendees” or “supporters,” government reports claim there are many Muslims in Britain estimated to have had some form of terrorist training. For

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<sup>62</sup> Klausen, “Counterterrorism and the Integration of Islam in Europe.”

<sup>63</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 114.

<sup>64</sup> Klausen, “Counterterrorism and the Integration of Islam in Europe.”

<sup>65</sup> Moniquet, “The Radicalization of Muslim Youth in Europe,” 5.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Bergen, “Our Ally, Our Problem.”

<sup>69</sup> Marc Champion, “U.K.’s Proposed Antiterror Rules Generate Protest; Some Muslims Say Moves to Ban Extremist Groups Could Alienate Community,” *Wall Street Journal*, 8 August 2005.

instance, in January 2002, British Intelligence discovered, in the mountains of Tora Bora Afghanistan, “the names of 1,200 British citizens, all Muslim, who trained with the Al-Qaeda network in Afghanistan.”<sup>70</sup> Updated information was provided by former Metropolitan police chief, Lord Stevens, when in July 2005 he revealed that “up to 3,000 British-born or British-based people had passed through Osama bin Laden’s training camps.”<sup>71</sup> Of those Britons who have trained with al-Qaeda, many have had actual battle experience in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kashmir, or Chechnya.<sup>72</sup> Considering Lord Stevens’ statement, it appears the *les Renseignements Généraux* formula (described above) could be applied to the British state as well.

These facts can be updated with what the MI5’s Director-General Eliza Manningham-Buller, said in her “Terrorist Threat to the U.K.” speech on 9 November 2006. She revealed that her organization is “working to contend with some 200 groupings or networks, totaling over 1,600 identified individuals (and there will be many we don’t know) who are actively engaging in plotting, or facilitating, terrorist acts here and overseas.” The Director-General went on to reference British opinion polls conducted since July 2005 which pointed out statistically speaking that “over 100,000 of our citizens consider that the July 2005 attacks in London were justified.” Again, this seems to validate the French formula if you would categorize someone as a “fundamentalist” if they believe the killing of 52 civilians was justified. Furthermore, Manningham-Buller is aware of thirty “plots to kill people and to damage our economy.”<sup>73</sup>

In summary, it is clear that there is a larger problem in the U.K. than just a few radical imams preaching hate. Chapter three of this thesis explains that British Muslims have reason to feel disenfranchised and alienated because of a multitude of reasons.

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<sup>70</sup> George Thomas, “London No Stranger to Radical Islamic Groups,” *CBN News*, <http://www.cbn.com/cbnnews/news/050707h.aspx> (accessed November 2006).

<sup>71</sup> Robert Winnett and David Leppard, “Leaked No. 10 Dossier Reveals Al-Qaeda’s British Recruits,” *The Sunday Times*, 10 July 2005, <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,2087-1688261,00.html> (accessed November 2006).

<sup>72</sup> Stelzer, “Letter from Londonistan”; Bhasi, “Paying a Heavy Price”; and Wiktorowicz, *Radical Islam Rising*, 3.

<sup>73</sup> Eliza Manningham-Buller, “The International Terrorist Treat to the UK” (speech presented at Queen Mary’s College, London, 9 November 2006), <http://www.mi5.gov.uk/output/Page568.html> (accessed December 2006).

Evidence provided above indicates that a significant number of those disenfranchised could be categorized as a risk to society. The importance of the existence of radical leaders in British society cannot be understated because the disenfranchised need someone to lead them. Because of liberal asylum and immigration laws, plus strict extradition and deportation laws, combined with liberal laws protecting free speech and freedom of religion, the disenfranchised have plenty of radical leaders to choose from.

A compelling question to ask is: where are all the moderate Muslim leaders? The focus of the paper thus far is on those who are radicalizing young Muslim men and how are they able to do so, but if moderates were better able to dilute the message of the extremists, then perhaps the state would not be in such a predicament.

Gilles Kepel, Professor and Chair of Middle East Studies at the Institute of Political Studies in Paris, has studied this question in some depth. He explains that there are three warring parties fighting for the hearts and minds of young Muslims and for the future of Islam in Europe. Two of the groups are separatists who do not want to integrate their culture with a European culture and the third group is integrationist in nature. On the separatist side are the adherents of jihad and the “sheikists.”<sup>74</sup> Both the sheikists and the integrationists represent moderate European Muslims.

The ideology of both the separatist groups is based on Salafism.<sup>75</sup> The jihadists like Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Mohammad, and Abu Hamza al-Masri believe in a violent, vocal, and active struggle to reconcile the differences between the West and Islam. The sheikists, however, are known as the pietistic or quiet Salafists because their approach to the same question is non-violent, inward looking, isolative, and reflective. They “preach self-imposed apartheid or advise believers to isolate themselves in a mental ghetto to avoid contamination by European infidels.”<sup>76</sup> Their approach is less

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<sup>74</sup> Gilles Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds: Islam and the West* (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2004), 249-60.

<sup>75</sup> “The word Salaf means predecessors (or ancestors) and refers to the Companions of the Prophet Muhammad, the early Muslims who followed them, and the scholars of the first three generations of Muslims. ... The Salafis view the first three generations of Muslims, who are the Prophet Muhammad's Companions, and the two generation after them as perfect examples of how Islam should be lived and practiced.” Therefore, Salafists seek to emulate these early generations in their daily lives. “Salafism,” *Dictionary by Labor Law Talk*, <http://dictionary.laborlawtalk.com/Salafism> (accessed November 2006).

<sup>76</sup> Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds*, 253.

newsworthy because their actions are not sensational. One reason their passive approach is not resonating with some youth was alluded to above in the discussion of imam recruitment—the sheikist imams recruited sometimes are out of touch with the societal troubles facing a young Muslim alienated in a country he calls home and therefore the youth reject these clerics’ perspectives and advice.

A second reason for the radicals’ appeal is the flashy imagery presented in their advertising campaigns. Enthusiasm, adventure, and flashiness are missing from the quiet salafists’ advertising campaign. That is not to say the advertising campaign from the quiet Salafists does not appeal to some, but for many spirited young Muslim men, the glory, nostalgia, and romanticism attached by the radicals to the jihad lore of wars past has much more appeal. The jihadists tell young men that they can be just like their Muslim heroes from the wars of yesteryear if they too fight in the name of Islam. They sell a convincing argument that martyrdom brings glory in the afterlife. A young man can have all this glory if he is willing to give his life to the greater good of Islam.

The third Islamic faction in Europe fighting for young European Muslims’ hearts and minds are the integrationists. Some of the integrationists walk in the footsteps of the Muslim Brotherhood like the U.K. based Federation of Islamic Organizations in Europe (FIOE).<sup>77</sup> Others include the Muslim Council of Britain, the Muslim Association of Britain, and the Islamic Society of Britain (to name a few). The integrationists seek “to collaborate with institutions and nongovernmental organizations. They advocate a gradual widening of Islamic influence in European cities through full participation in political, social, and cultural life.”<sup>78</sup> In short, they seek to assimilate, but with their own distinct Muslim seat at the political discussion table. The idea here is to participate fully in British society and politics, but to participate fully as Muslims, “blending innate Arab or Muslim traits with acquired European ones.”<sup>79</sup> This will eventually give Muslims a vote in forming British domestic and international policy. Note, however, that maintaining Muslim identity is central for the integrationists. They are not secularists and obviously reject the separatist notions of the adherents of jihad and the quiet

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<sup>77</sup> Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds*, 253.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 263.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 249.

Salafists. In the competition for the hearts and minds of young Muslims they run into some of the same problems as the quiet Salafists.

A third reason why the radical message is so successful is intimidation, a problem for both the quiet Salafists and the integrationists. The following story is just one example of the intimidation factor. The general opinion of the Stockwell mosque was that it was a moderate place of worship. In 2003 a group of 50 extremists, hailing from the Finsbury Park mosque, “attempted to wrest control of the Stockwell mosque in south London.” They did this because they were “searching for a spiritual home for the radical cleric Abu Hamza al-Masri following the [police] raid upon [his] mosque and its subsequent closure” earlier that year. The group intimidated the imam, wrote “a letter demanding the imam’s suspension,” and intimidated worshipers.<sup>80</sup> Paul Tumelty, a terrorism analyst at the Jamestown Foundation, comments further:

For a period, members of the group turned up to the Stockwell mosque on a daily basis, calling unsanctioned meetings and intimidating the faithful. On a number of occasions they attacked the mosque’s worshipers, attempted to break-in, and sprayed graffiti on its walls.<sup>81</sup>

In sum, it is not there are not moderate Muslim leaders in the U.K. In any debate there are winners and losers, and for reasons described about, the moderates lost out in the battle for the hearts and minds of men like the 7/7 bombers.

### **3. Results of Lenient Laws**

The fact that, in the not so distant past, men like Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Muhammad, and Abu Hamza al-Masri were able to seek asylum, get away with espousing their radical messages, avoid arrest for so long, and avoid extradition suggests that there may be unwanted loopholes in British traditions and laws. The problem that the Britons are faced with is the need to protect themselves against domestic enemies while upholding principles they hold dear to their hearts: humanitarian principles like multicultural tolerance and protection from religious persecution, and civil rights principles like freedom of speech and the right to privacy.<sup>82</sup> How tolerant should a

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<sup>80</sup> Tumelty, “Reassessing the July 21 London Bombings,” 2.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Stelzer, “Letter from Londonistan.”

nation be in terms of who qualifies for political asylum and what radicals claim is a right to freedom of speech and freedom of religion?

First, it is necessary to understand British traditions and their mindset towards international terrorism. Because the 9/11 attacks did not occur on British soil, there was a common misconception held by British citizens that they were not really at risk. Britain looked at the war against terrorism more as a game of criminals and cops and not as a war.<sup>83</sup> A failure to see any threat to Britain combined with traditional British beliefs that emphasize the importance of freedom of speech and multicultural tolerance make it understandable how Bakri Mohammad and Abu Hamza had the liberty to preach jihad without reproach.<sup>84</sup> Additionally, the tradition of asylum for the persecuted is ingrained in British values.

Britain's "asylum laws were designed to protect ... dissidents and refugees from foreign governments."<sup>85</sup> This is a long-standing tradition. For example, both Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin sought and were provided refuge in the U.K. after fleeing their homelands. In modern times, the result of this tradition "is that, for the Middle Eastern refugee population, a proportion of them can claim asylum specifically on the basis of their Islamist political opinion and activity."<sup>86</sup> As of 2001, approximately "2,000 Middle East dissidents a year poured into Britain."<sup>87</sup> Some of these men were radical Arab Islamists who rigorously preached defiant messages openly and this was a contributing factor to the birth of local Islamist terror cells anxious to target at home.<sup>88</sup>

Once in Britain, radicals are home free because authorities, shackled by their own laws, are caught in a catch-22. Because Britain is a party to the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the British government cannot extradite or otherwise force individuals to their home country or a third other country, if in the country in question the said individual could face torture or inhumane or degrading

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<sup>83</sup> Stelzer, "Letter from Londonistan."

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ulph, "Londonistan," 2.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Nicholas Pelham, "Bin Laden's Strong Links to Britain," *BBC*, 26 September 2001, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/1564626.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/1564626.stm) (accessed November 2006).

<sup>88</sup> Robert S. Leiken, "Europe's Angry Muslims," *Foreign Affairs*, 84, no. 4 (July/August 2005): 120.



treatment or punishment (article 3) or the death penalty (article 3 and protocol 6). This law applies not only to Middle Eastern or third world countries, but also to the U.S. and France. As a result, the British government must work individual bilateral agreements between other governments before extradition can occur. Prior to 7/7 this was almost an impossibility as the British government, or more accurately the British courts, typically sided with human rights activists who rejected the idea of deportation on the grounds that foreign governments could not be trusted to refrain from subjecting these prisoners to inhumane treatment.

In a free society there will always be a difficult balancing act between protecting the public from someone willing to say something that might harm them and protecting civil liberties like freedom of speech. These conflicting forces are clearly illustrated by the fact that just 30 days after the 7/7 bombings, Britain let the Qatari Muslim cleric Yusuf al-Qaradawi into the country to speak at a conference. Al-Qaradawi has defended suicide bombings, justified the killing of Israeli women, backed the execution of homosexuals, called for the killing of Jews, and said that wife-beating with the hand is acceptable. In contrast to Britain, the Americans barred al-Qaradawi from entry to the U.S.<sup>89</sup> In the British case, part of the problem was that fact that “the British legal system [was not] equipped to deal with British citizens whose only offense was the support of violence in other countries.”<sup>90</sup> This problem was remedied with the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005, which now makes it illegal for someone to promote armed struggle not only domestically, but also abroad. Prior to this law, radicals like Abu Hamza were doing their worst because they could get away with it.

There have been laws on the books in Britain to address terrorism from at least 1974, but the Terrorism Act of 2000 is a starting point for modern terrorist legislation. “The Act came into force in response to the changing threat from international terrorism, and replaced the previous temporary anti-terrorism legislation that dealt primarily with

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<sup>89</sup> Robert S. Leiken, “Europe’s Angry Muslims,”

<sup>90</sup> Yael Shahar, “Islamic Radicals in the UK: A Double-Edged Sword,” *Institute for Counter-Terrorism*, 7 July 2005, <http://www.ict.org.il/index.php?sid=119&lang=en&act=page&id=5288&str=Shahar> (accessed November 2006).

Northern Ireland.”<sup>91</sup> Under the Terrorism Act of 2000, via the Secretary of State, an organization is defined as a terrorist organization if it “commits or participates in acts of terrorism, prepares for terrorism, promotes or encourages terrorism, or is otherwise concerned in terrorism either in the UK or abroad.”<sup>92</sup> Britain’s Home Office maintains the state’s official list of terrorist organizations as named by the Secretary of State. As of November 2006 there are 44 international organizations and 14 organizations from Northern Ireland on the list.<sup>93</sup>

After 9/11, the British parliament passed an emergency piece of legislation, The Anti-Terrorism, Crime, and Security Act (ATCSA) of 2001. This law allowed the detention of *non-British* citizens suspected to be a risk to national security. It permitted detaining individuals where there was insufficient evidence to prosecute them. The length of detention is not defined and therefore could hypothetically lead to an indefinite detention without the right to a fair trial. Britain could not easily deport these threatening non-British citizens because Britain is a signatory to the 1950 ECHR. Laws enacted after that agreement do not allow the British government to deport or extradite a person to a country known to torture or inhumanely treat prisoners and this includes countries that permit capital punishment. When British officials cannot deport a suspected terrorist and they cannot charge him with a crime, ATCSA allows the government to put a suspect in prison until he is no longer a threat or a third “humane” country will take the prisoner. British courts had a serious problem with the fact that ATCSA ran contrary to both the ECHR and updated, British specific, human rights legislation—the U.K.’s Human Rights Act of 1998.<sup>94</sup>

To remedy the problem between the courts and the Parliament, ATCSA was replaced by the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 just four months prior to London’s 7/7

<sup>91</sup> Home Office, “The Terrorism Act 2000,” December 2006, <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act/> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>92</sup> Home Office Press Office, “Home Secretary Move to 15 Ban [sic] Terror Groups” (article presented on Home Office Press Office web page, 10 October 2005), [http://press.homeoffice.gov.uk/press-releases/home\\_secretary\\_bans\\_15\\_terror\\_gr?version=1](http://press.homeoffice.gov.uk/press-releases/home_secretary_bans_15_terror_gr?version=1) (accessed December 2006).

<sup>93</sup> Home Office, “List of Proscribed Terrorist Groups,” December 2006, <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act/proscribed-groups> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>94</sup> Home Office, “Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001,” December 2006, <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/anti-terrorism-crime-security-ac/> (accessed December 2006).

bombings. This act adjusted two things. First, it replaced indefinite prison detention with “control orders” which could mean house arrest, limitations on the use of the internet or cell phones, electronic tagging, and more. Also, the act now permitted detention of both *British citizens and non-British citizens* who are suspected to be terrorists. This detention is limited to 28 days. After that the individual must be charged with a crime, placed on control orders, or freed.<sup>95</sup>

With the attacks of 7/7 the ante was again raised and as of 22 August 2005, Prime Minister Tony Blair planned to prevent further attacks by strengthening legislation to combat terrorism. His new 12-point plan piggybacked on the Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 and could curtail more civil liberties and freedom of speech. Part of the plan includes “banning radical groups, extending pretrial detention, and listing extremist centers and bookshops that will trigger deportation of any foreigner ‘actively engaged’ with them.”<sup>96</sup>

Many in the British Muslim community feel “Blair’s 12-point plan is like cork in a volcano that intensifies the us [Muslims] vs. them [British government] feeling.”<sup>97</sup> Of course not only the Muslim community, but also British civil libertarians are appalled by Blair’s 12-point plan.<sup>98</sup> Few argue that the terrorist threat is not real, but even many Lords of the British courts side with the civil libertarians. They argue that “arbitrary and oppressive action on the part of government” is available under the new anti-terrorism laws and this increases “the risk of a miscarriage of justice.”<sup>99</sup>

The outcome of the debate was the Terrorism Act 2006. This act makes “it more difficult for extremists to ... encourage others to commit terrorist acts,” whilst hiding under the guise of freedom of speech or freedom of religion. The act makes it illegal to

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<sup>95</sup> Home Office, “Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005,” December 2006, <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/prevention-of-terrorism/> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>96</sup> J.F.O. McAllister and Helen Gibson, “Closing Down Londonistan,” *Time International*, 22 August 2005, Atlantic ed., 16; and Editorial, “More Bombs in London,” *Washington Post*, 22 July 2005, A22.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> John Kampfner, “Why the French call us Londonistan,” *New Statesman*, 9 December 2002, <http://www.newstatesman.com/200212090009> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>99</sup> See statements by the Lords of Her Majesty’s Most Honourable Privy Council and Lord Walker of Gestingthorpe. Eurolegal Services, *UK Terrorism Legislation*, 26 August 2005, <http://www.eurolegal.org/isterbrit/UKatleg.htm> (accessed December 2006).

plan acts of terror, encourage or glorify terrorism, disseminate terrorist publications, and to be in attendance at a place of terrorist training.<sup>100</sup> Opposition leaders still voice the same concerns as were raised over Blair's 12-point plan.

#### **4. British Toleration of Terrorist Groups**

The problem of weak anti-terrorism laws was only part of the problem. There is also evidence indicating that British authorities knew what many radicals were up to, but chose to look the other way for political, strategic, and other reasons. Three case studies of the British government's interaction with France, Egypt, and Libya, with regards to Islamist terrorists, shed light on the following questions: Did British authorities know there was a hotbed of radical Islamist activity in their country? Did British authorities knowingly harbor radical Islamists? If the answer to those two questions is "yes," then why?

In the mid- to late-1990s several countries complained about "Londonistan." Among others, France and Egypt complained that Islamic terrorists, hostile to their state, were taking refuge in the U.K. "France charged that the Algerian Armed Islamic Group (GIA) used London as an operational base from which to carry out bombings in Paris in the mid-1990s. Cairo has long argued that British complacency allowed members of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad to operate on its territory with impunity."<sup>101</sup>

The French complaints were based on investigations that uncovered that Rachid Ramda was the financier of the 1995 Paris metro attacks. He was arrested in 1995 by British police, at French request, but his extradition request was denied for ten years—obviously upsetting the French.<sup>102</sup> French complaints were not limited to simply the Paris metro bombings. In a second example, Algerian Lamine Maroni, the man behind the failed 2000 Strasbourg cathedral bombing plot, "lived off of [British] state benefits

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<sup>100</sup> Home Office, "Terrorism Act 2006," December 2006, <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/security/terrorism-and-the-law/terrorism-act-2006/> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>101</sup> Paul Gallis, *European Counterterrorist Efforts: Political Will and Diverse Responses in the First Year After September 11 (RL31612)*—CRS Report for Congress (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 17 October 2002), 100.

<sup>102</sup> Jeremy Shapiro and Benedicte Suzan, "The French Experience of Counter-Terrorism," *Survival* (The Brookings Institution), Spring 2003, 86, 96, <http://www.brookings.edu/views/articles/fellows/shapiro20030301.htm> (accessed November 2006).

and was housed by a Home Office-sponsored agency,” while he planned his attacks.<sup>103</sup> The list of complaints seemed never-ending and led the French to dub the city of London “l’antechambre de l’Afghanistan,”<sup>104</sup> meaning it was a microcosm of Afghanistan.

In Egypt, besides the Egyptian complaint that Britain harbored members of Egyptian Islamic Jihad, Cairo was particularly upset when Abu Hamza publicly announced his approval of the October 1997 terrorist attack in Luxor, Egypt that left 58 European tourists dead. This led to a formal denunciation of British policies regarding asylum seekers—Cairo defined Britain as “a hotbed for radicals.”<sup>105</sup>

Going further, Egypt pointed out that “of its 14 most wanted terrorists, seven ... were based in Britain.” The poster child of for the notorious 14 was Yasser al-Sirri who was “sentenced to death in absentia [by Egyptian courts] for plotting the failed assassination of ... Egyptian prime minister [Atef Sidqi in 1993], and still running—with British permission—the Islamic Observation Centre in London, a mouthpiece for Egyptian rebels” (as of 2001).<sup>106</sup>

The brief overview of the French and Egyptian cases definitely shows a trend that the British government was accommodating and tolerant of Islamic radicals, especially prior to 9/11. Even more surprising to many was the fact that even Libya complained that Britain knowingly harbored terrorists. Matt Chebatoris, civilian terrorism analyst, Joint Analysis Center, U.S. European Command—Royal Air Force Molesworth, United Kingdom, pointed out that there was a tendency of the British authorities to look the other way when it came to individuals affiliated with terrorist groups, such as the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group<sup>107</sup> (LIFG), who were allowed to operate in Britain as long as they were not conducting attacks against or in the UK.<sup>108</sup>

LIFG is an organization of Islamist radicals that seeks regime change in Libya. Repression by Muammar al-Qaddafi’s regime led to LIFG dispersal around the globe.

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<sup>103</sup> Ulph, “Londonistan,” 2.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>105</sup> Pelham, “Bin Laden’s Strong Links to Britain.”

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Also known as *al-Jama’a al-Islamiyyah al-Muqatilah fi-Libya*.

<sup>108</sup> Chebatoris, interview by author, 2 October 2006.

Some landed in the U.K. Britain granted asylum on the basis of what was mentioned above—the tradition of granting asylum to political dissidents who would be persecuted in their home countries. LIFG men indeed fit that bill. LIFG activists living in Britain always focused their militant actions abroad, not domestically, and this may be one reason why authorities looked away from any suspicious virulent activity perpetrated by the group. Such activities included anti-Libyan regime propaganda, financing, and terrorist planning, as well as alliance with other terrorist organization like al-Qaeda or the GIA.

A second reason authorities did not crackdown on LIFG members in Britain relates to an idea mentioned earlier—there were no laws on the books to prosecute those who were promoting armed struggle abroad. A third and most intriguing possibility relates to the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie Scotland. That event put Qaddafi and his regime on unfriendly terms with Downing Street. Therefore it is possible that the British government did nothing to curtail the activities of LIFG members simply because of the animosity they felt for Qaddafi's regime. There is some support for this supposition. Ex-MI5 officer David Shayler claims that British intelligence helped to finance LIFG's failed assassination attempt on Qaddafi in 1996. That allegation has not been proven, but it certainly seems plausible.<sup>109</sup> The French, Egyptian, and Libyan stories demonstrate that the British authorities knew their country was a hotbed for Islamic activity, and they also knew that they were harboring radical Islamists.

There are at least four possible explanations for the British response to Islamists in their country. First, there was no reason to crack down on the Islamists because they were not a threat to Britons. "By the mid-1990s the UK's intelligence agencies and the police were well aware that London was increasingly being used as a base by individuals involved in promoting, funding and planning terrorism in the Middle East and elsewhere. However, these individuals were not viewed as a threat to the UK's national security, and

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<sup>109</sup> Alison Pargeter, "LIFG: An Organization in Eclipse," *Terrorism Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation), II, no. 21, (3 November 2005): 6-9; and Gary Gambill, "The Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG)," *Terrorism Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation), III, no. 6 (24 March 2005), <http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?search=1&articleid=2369477> (accessed November 2006).

so they were left to continue their activities with relative impunity.”<sup>110</sup> In essence, the authorities at the time only had a narrow focus, “national security.” The GIA, the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, and the LIFG were someone else’s problem.

A second explanation is that existing laws did not allow authorities to arrest anyone who was preparing, promoting, or encouraging terrorism abroad. It was not until the Terrorism Act of 2000 that arrests could be made for other than for domestic offenses in those areas. Extradition laws similarly tied British hands. For example, even if British authorities arrested the seven alleged terrorists wanted by the Egyptian government, British laws forbade deportation or extradition of these men to Egypt based on Egypt’s history of human rights abuses against political prisoners.

The third explanation is that an unlikely “deal” existed between the Islamists and British authorities. Some postulate that there was an agreement whereby Islamists would not be harassed by the police or other authorities so long as the targets were outside Britain. No British official will verify this unlikely deal, but Omar Bakri Muhammad described such a deal in an interview with a London Arabic newspaper, *Asharq Alawsat*, on 22 August 1998. When asked why Islamic groups have never attacked Britain he responded, “I work here in accordance with the covenant of peace which I made with the British government when I got [political] asylum. ... We respect the terms of this bond as Allah orders us to do.”<sup>111</sup>

The fourth explanation was mentioned above in the LIFG discussion: the enemy of my enemy is my friend. If LIFG members based in the U.K. were harassing a regime unfriendly to the British government, why should the British have given these men up to the Qaddafi regime?

This section provided some explanations as to why Britain became a hotbed of Islamist activity and why the authorities responded to this activity in the manner that they

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<sup>110</sup> Frank Gregory and Paul Wilkinson “Riding Pillion for Tackling Terrorism is a High-risk Policy,” in “Security Terrorism and the UK,” *International Security Programme at Chatham House Briefing Paper 05/01*, July 2005, 2-4, [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/chatham\\_house\\_security\\_report\\_11\\_07\\_05.pdf](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/chatham_house_security_report_11_07_05.pdf) (accessed December 2006).

<sup>111</sup> Yotam Feldner, “Radical Islamist Profiles (2): Sheikh Omar Bakri Muhammad,” *The Middle East Media Research Institute, Inquiry and Analysis Series*, no. 73 (24 October, 2001), [http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=ia&ID=IA7301#\\_edn7](http://memri.org/bin/articles.cgi?Page=archives&Area=ia&ID=IA7301#_edn7) (accessed December 2006).

did. The four possible explanations are not the only ones, but provide a basis for understanding what is fueling pan-Islamism in Britain.

### **C. CONCLUSION**

The British system of laws and practices were designed to protect values that all members of a free society hold dear to the heart: asylum for the persecuted, freedom of religion and speech, protection from human rights abuses and other civil liberties. It is clear that radical Islamists were able to take advantage of loopholes in the British system and radicalize some Muslim youths. However, domestic Islamism alone is not enough to cajole well integrated young Muslims. Young men were receptive to radical messages because they were alienated from their British community. The sources of this alienation are described next.



### **III. SOURCES OF ALIENATION**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION OF THE ARGUMENT**

This chapter argues that many young Muslims are alienated from British society, and that this alienation makes youth vulnerable to extremist preachers and causes them to identify with pan-Islamism, rather than with a British identity. This in turn makes them more receptive to extremist influences. This chapter will focus on domestic issues, leaving issues related to British foreign policy to chapter four.

Researchers, academics, surveys, polls, government reports, nongovernmental reports, and interviews with civic and political Muslim and non-Muslim leaders have demonstrated that there are a sizeable number of alienated young Muslims in Britain. The sources of alienation can be broken down into six socio-economic discussion areas: politics; unemployment and economic inactivity; standard of living; the perception of religious discrimination, racism, and Islamophobia; education; and the police, the courts, and anti-terrorism legislation.

The chapter has three parts. First, there is a discussion of Britain's immigration policy of multiculturalism, a comparison to other nations, and a discussion of why Britain chose multiculturalism and what the results have been. Next, there is a brief overview of the statistics regarding the Muslim community in Britain. Last, there is a detailed discussion of the six socio-economic sources of alienation mentioned above.

#### **B. THE INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS: IMMIGRATION POLICIES REVIEWED**

In the past twenty years or so there have been three types of immigration policies common to North America, Western Europe, and Australia, as described by Stephen Castles and Mark Miller in their book *The Age of Migration*.<sup>112</sup> These policies are differential exclusion, assimilationism, and multiculturalism.<sup>113</sup>

As used in the following discussion, the term “integration” means “the bringing of people of different racial or ethnic groups into unrestricted and equal association, as in

<sup>112</sup> Stephen Castles is Professor of Migration and Refugee Studies and Director of the Refugee Studies Center at the University of Oxford, U.K. Mark Miller is Emma Smith Morris Professor of Political Science and International Relations at the University of Delaware.

<sup>113</sup> Castles and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 249.

society or an organization; desegregation.”<sup>114</sup> Segregation inhibits integration both formally and informally. For instance, segregation can be state sanctioned as in the formal apartheid laws of South Africa prior to 1990 or it can be socially enforced or de facto as in the separation of blacks and whites in the southern United States in the early twentieth century. The term “assimilation” means “the process whereby a minority group gradually adopts the customs and attitudes of the prevailing culture.”<sup>115</sup> Sociologist Milton M. Gordon describes it as a seven-stage process, starting with the adoption of “the language, dress, and other daily customs of the host society,” moving on to the “large-scale entrance of minorities into the cliques, clubs, and institutions of the host society,” and finally resulting in things like “frequent intermarriage” and the disappearance of prejudice, discrimination, and civic conflicts.<sup>116</sup>

The two terms describe stages in a process. First, a person is integrated into the society—no longer separate from the rest of society—and then a person is assimilated—fully a part of the society, both legally (a citizen with full rights under the law) and socially. They are truly accepted as equals by all.

The first policy, policy of differential exclusion, means that the state never intends for the migrants to immigrate permanently, i.e., the migrants are simply guest workers. This policy was adopted by Germany up until the year 2000.<sup>117</sup> Under this system, an immigrant is excluded from “citizenship and from the community” and is only a temporary guest worker who will, in theory, eventually return to his or her nation of origin.<sup>118</sup> This type of immigration policy has essentially been abandoned.

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<sup>114</sup> “Integration,” *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), at Answers.com, GuruNet Corp, <http://www.answers.com/integration> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>115</sup> “Assimilation,” *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), at Answers.com, GuruNet Corp, <http://www.answers.com/assimilation> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>116</sup> Milton M. Gordon, *Assimilation in American Life: The Role of Race, Religion, and National Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), in *Encyclopedia of American History*, at Answers.com, <http://www.answers.com/assimilation> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>117</sup> Castles and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 44, 249.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

Under a policy of assimilationism, immigrants must become “culturally and socially absorbed, ... indistinguishable from the existing population.”<sup>119</sup> Newcomers may be admitted into the community provided “they adhere to the political rules and are willing to adopt the national culture.”<sup>120</sup> The French are the strongest advocates of this policy, as to a lesser extent are the Americans.

Multiculturalism, on the other hand, is a system where newcomers are admitted and allowed to “maintain cultural difference and form ethnic communities providing they adhere to the political rules.”<sup>121</sup> Multiculturalism is probably the most common immigration policy. It is the policy in countries like the U.K., Australia, and Sweden where “immigrants are not forced to conform to a dominant cultural or linguistic model but instead can maintain their native languages and cultural life if they choose to do so.”<sup>122</sup> The idea behind multiculturalism is that “the diversity produced by immigration is seen as an enrichment rather than as a threat to the predominant culture.”<sup>123</sup> Multiculturalism gives the immigrants freedom of choice, a founding principle of democracy. The expectation under this policy is that in time “most immigrants and their offspring will reconcile their cultural heritage with the prevailing culture, and the latter will be somewhat altered, and most likely richer, for that.”<sup>124</sup> This expectation is not always fulfilled, however, and multiculturalism can lead to discrimination and disadvantage. For instance, immigrants to Britain who choose not to learn English “can find themselves disadvantaged in the labour market.” Also, evidence suggests that the “maintenance of some cultural norms may be a form of discriminatory social control.”<sup>125</sup>

Proponents of assimilationism argue that enrichment of the prevailing culture and celebration of diversity is not necessary and the eventual reconciliation of cultures does not occur fast enough. They point out that the dominant ethnic group often does not want

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<sup>119</sup> Castles and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 212.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 281.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

its culture threatened by potentially competing cultures.<sup>126</sup> On the other hand, loss of one's cultural heritage may lead to resentment and anger on the side of the immigrant community. The current, heated headscarf debate in France is an example where government policy not to allow Muslim women students to wear headscarves in state schools has caused a furor among Muslims.

### **C. THE BRITISH MUSLIM COMMUNITY: GENERAL STATISTICS**

According to the latest census (2001), there are nearly 60 million people in the United Kingdom. Of the total, there are officially 1.6 million Muslims,<sup>127</sup> but if “undocumented and asylum seeking Muslims” are added, the number may be as high as two million.<sup>128</sup> Thus, Muslims make up 2.7 - 3.4 percent of the British population, or three percent in a round number. Muslims comprise the second largest religious sect next to Christians. The Muslim population is anything but ethnically homogeneous. The largest Muslim ethnic groups are the Pakistanis (43 percent), the Bangladeshis (16 percent), and the Indians (eight percent). There is also a diverse mix of other British Muslim ethnicities including Arabs, Afghans, Iranians, Turks, Kurds, Kosovars, North Africans, Somalis, and Black Africans. The majority of British Muslims were born abroad, but 46 percent were born in the British Isles.<sup>129</sup> Compared to the rest of the population, “Muslims have the youngest age profile of all faith groups in Great Britain.”<sup>130</sup> Finally, Muslims tend to be concentrated in just a few cities and they are further concentrated in the poorer parts of those cities.<sup>131</sup>

### **D. SIX SOURCES OF ALIENATION**

There are six areas of socio-economic concern that have served to alienate some British Muslims from mainstream British society. Alienation at a minimum fuels the strengthening of a pan-Islamic identity, to the detriment of a British identity, and at a maximum could possibly be a contributing factor for extremism and domestic terrorism.

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<sup>126</sup> Castles and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 252.

<sup>127</sup> The exact population of the United Kingdom in the 2001 census was 58,789,194. See Office for National Statistics, “Census 2001, Profiles.”

<sup>128</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 12f.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-13.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>131</sup> For a specific breakdown see Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 13.

## 1. Politics

At the national level, British Muslims are dissatisfied with a perceived lack of protection of their religious rights and with xenophobic legislation, as well as with British foreign policy. At the local level, however, Muslims are achieving significant representation.

Jytte Klausen,<sup>132</sup> as part of her study of Muslims in Europe, compared the number of Muslim politicians that have been elected to local and national government positions in six different European countries. In Britain, she found that there are a large number of Muslim politicians represented in local governments, while at the national level Muslim representation lags.<sup>133</sup> The reasons for this are several. Mass Muslim migrations into Britain have been going on for several decades, which has allowed political representation to slowly evolve. This has not been the case in other European countries.<sup>134</sup> There are two other factors peculiar to Britain that boost Muslim participation in local government. First, “local party committees are largely free to decide who gets to stand for elections,” and second, “the combination of decentralized local government and a high degree of residential segregation ... facilitates immigrant representation.”<sup>135</sup> Overall, “demography and the boundaries of municipal government conspire ... to foster inclusion” in Britain’s local level politics.<sup>136</sup>

Nationally, Muslims are not as well represented. Currently there are eleven Muslims in the British Parliament.<sup>137</sup> This is less than one percent of the seats for a group that comprises approximately three percent of the population. Thus, the ability of Muslim representatives to influence national policies is minimal.

Muslims have three major concerns about national, as opposed to local, politics. Results from Britain’s Home Office 2001 Citizenship Survey show that Muslims were the most concerned of any faith group that the government is doing “too little” to protect

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<sup>132</sup> Dr. Klausen is Professor of Comparative Politics at Brandeis University.

<sup>133</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 7.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 23-4.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

the rights of people belonging to various religions in Britain. While the majority of Muslims felt that the government was providing the “right amount” of protection, 34 percent of Muslims felt that the government was doing too little. For the general population, only 27 percent said the government was doing little.<sup>138</sup> This is not a big difference, but it is notable that of all faith groups, Muslims were the most disaffected in this area.

The Muslim community perceives political promises to crackdown on radical Muslims as xenophobia. Many Muslims perceive legislation from the Terrorism Act of 2000 to the Terrorism Act 2006 as an attack on their religion, rather than as legislation necessary to protect the community. Klausen asked British Muslim civic and political leaders this question: Is “right-wing antiforeigner rhetoric not important, somewhat important, or very important” in explaining who is responsible for problems like discrimination against Muslims in Britain? Seventy-three percent chose “very important” and not one person chose “not important” as an answer.<sup>139</sup> Klausen asked these same leaders if they were “generally satisfied with the way Muslims are treated” in Britain. The majority said they were only somewhat happy. The immediate complaints raised were the “perceived impact” of xenophobic anti-terrorism legislation, but also unhappiness “about the Iraq war.”<sup>140</sup>

The most significant feeling of political impotence for British Muslims is their inability to effect changes in British foreign policy, primarily relating to Iraq, but also to Afghanistan, the Palestinian territories, and other Muslim lands. Gilles Kepel explained how political impotence can lead to terrorism. He used the May 2003 Casablanca bombings in his example, but the motives uncovered thus far for both the Casablanca and the 7/7 terrorist attacks were similar. Kepel said, “The Casablanca attacks resulted from a mix of Al Qaeda’s ideology with the social frustrations of dispossessed young men who decided, under the influence of radical salafist imams, to translate their political

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<sup>138</sup> Maria O’Beirne, *Religion in England and Wales: Findings from the 2001 Home Office Citizenship Survey* (London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, March 2004), 24-5.

<sup>139</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 59.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 53.

impotence into terrorism.”<sup>141</sup> Kepel and other scholars consider terrorism to be a tool used to influence politics when politics by other means is perceived to be a futile endeavor.

Moderate Muslim leaders in the U.K. share Kepel’s point of view. Just after the 7 July 2005 bombings in London, Dilowar Khan,<sup>142</sup> director of the East London Mosque, stated what he thought was likely to be the motivation of the 7/7 terrorists. He believed it was “hopelessness,” by which he meant “opposition to the policies of powerful nations. ... Until Iraq, the British government was also looked up to and admired in some ways. ... Now the situation may be changing.”<sup>143</sup> To Khan “there is considerable ill-will toward America among Muslims because of its policies toward the Muslim world.” Because Britain is America’s closest ally in the war on terror, Britain shares the ill-will. Chapter four addresses the implications of British foreign policy in more detail.

In sum, dissatisfaction with protection of religious rights, perceived xenophobic legislation, and the inability to change British foreign policy contributed to the alienation of British Muslims.

## **2. Unemployment and Economic Inactivity**

Muslims have higher unemployment rates and higher levels of economic inactivity than the rest of the British population. National Statistics is an official government-run website that posts and updates British statistics on everything from health to the economy.<sup>144</sup> The section on religion paints a gloomy picture of the position of Muslims in the British workforce. In 2004, for both men and women, Muslims have the highest unemployment rate of any religious group. The graph below shows the breakdown.

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<sup>141</sup> Kepel, *The War for Muslim Minds*, 142.

<sup>142</sup> According to Professor Shore, Dilowar Khan appeared to be a moderate Muslim. Shore says that to his knowledge Khan does not advocate violence and supports the idea of integration into British society. Shore met with Khan in a series of interviews for his book *Breeding Bin Laden’s*. Zachary Shore (Naval Postgraduate School), interview by author, Monterey, California, 26 October 2006.

<sup>143</sup> Shore, *Breeding Bin Laden’s*, 12-16.

<sup>144</sup> See Office for National Statistics homepage, online at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk> (accessed December 2006).

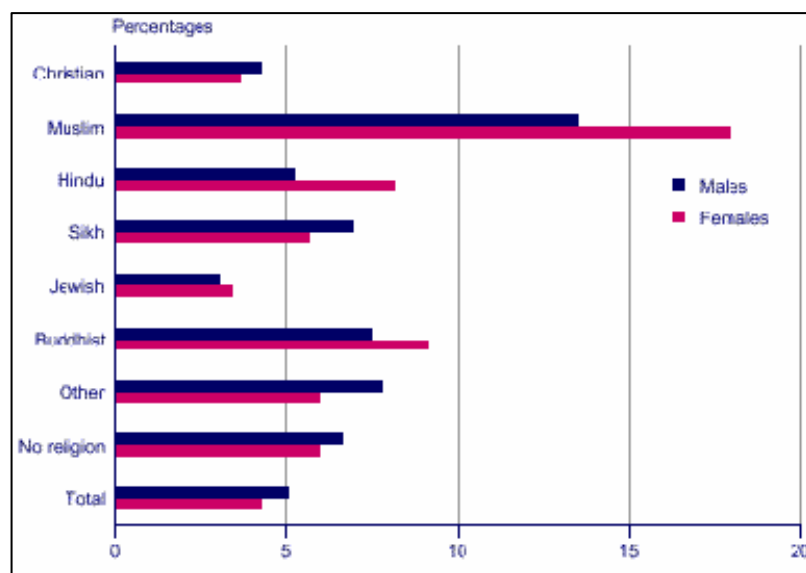


Figure 3. Unemployment Rates by Religion and Sex, 2004<sup>145</sup>

The large number of unemployed Muslim women will be discussed later in this section.

An alarming fact, not depicted in figure three, is that Muslims age 16 to 24 have the highest unemployment rate of any group at 28 percent. This is more than double the percentage of unemployed Christian men in the same age group who have just an 11 percent unemployment rate.<sup>146</sup> This is alarming because young Muslim men are the primary recruitment targets of extremist leaders like Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Mohammad, and Abu Hamza al-Masri. Joblessness can lead to hopelessness, aimlessness, and frustration with society. Radical Islamists claim to have the answer to what ails 16-24 year old British Muslim males. Radical Islamists give young unemployed Muslim males something to do and a purpose in life.

Related to unemployment is another indicator of alienation, economic inactivity. Economic inactivity is defined as “not available for work and/or not actively seeking work.”<sup>147</sup> Here again Muslims are doing the worst of any religious group, even if the difference is slight when only men are considered (see figure four below). Those who

<sup>145</sup> Office for National Statistics, “Religion, Labour Market,” 21 February 2006. [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget\\_print.asp?ID=979](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget_print.asp?ID=979) (accessed December 2006).

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. The Open Society Institute, citing the Ethnic Minority Employment Division, Department of Work and Pensions, 2004, claims that the unemployment rate for Muslims compared to Christians was 17.5 percent and 7.9 percent respectively. Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 16. While these figures are different from those cited in the text above, the point to note is that with both sources, Muslims age 16-24 are more than twice as likely to be unemployed than their Christian counterparts.

<sup>147</sup> Office for National Statistics, “Religion, Labour Market.”



believe Muslims are no worse off than the rest point out that the slight difference for Muslim men “is partly explained by the young age profile of Muslims and the correspondingly high proportion of students.” On the other hand, comparing older Muslim men to men in the same age group from other religious affiliations, the Muslim men “tended to have the highest levels of economic inactivity, largely due to ill health.”<sup>148</sup> Age differences are not depicted in the figure below, but the graphs provide a visual depiction of how Muslims are faring relative to other British religious groups

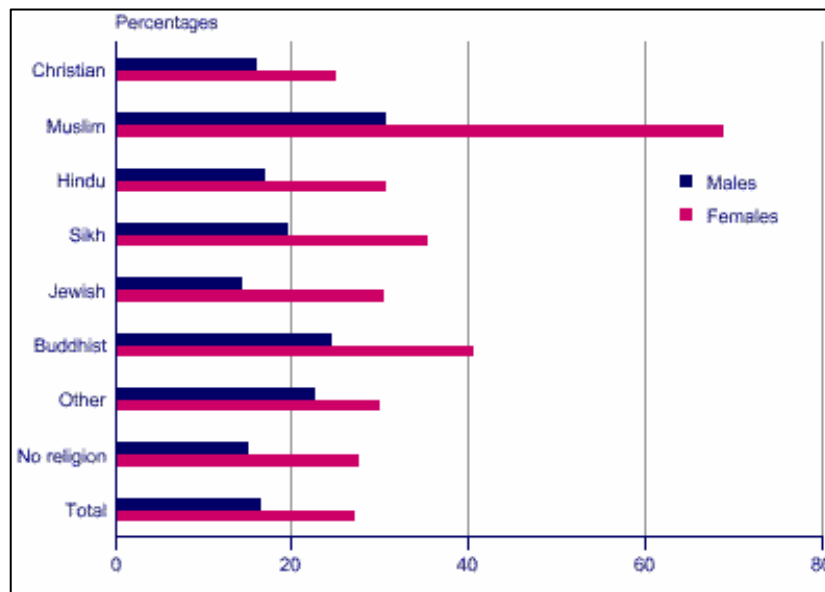


Figure 4. Economic Inactivity Rates, by Religion and Sex, 2004<sup>149</sup>

Why are so many Muslims unemployed and economically inactive? A common belief is that there must be religious discrimination and racism in the workplace. There is some evidence that employers simply will not hire Muslims. This question is discussed in section four below. Klausen mentioned other factors in her study:

While aggregate statistic on labor market activity is indicative of socio-economic variations from one demographic group to another, it does not allow us to make solid inferences about the causes of discrimination because other issues, such as differences in educational attainment or culturally determined expectations with respect to women’s employment, may also explain why one group fares worse than another.<sup>150</sup>

<sup>148</sup> Office for National Statistics, “Religion, Labour Market.”

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 62.

So the extremely high levels of economic inactivity and unemployment of Muslim women may be related to the group's expectations of its women and not necessarily to discrimination. For instance, there is patriarchal enforcement of long-standing Muslim religious traditions where women are regarded as caretakers of the house and family as opposed to workers outside of the home. Klausen mentioned other issues. She noted from the 2001 British census that "young Muslim women marry significantly earlier and have more children and give birth earlier than other immigrant groups." This can partially explain the results displayed on the graphs above because "irrespective of faith and ethnicity, marriage and early childbirth work against educational and professional attainment among young women."<sup>151</sup>

As for the economic status of men, it is necessary to look at differences in educational attainment and job qualifications in addition to possible discrimination in the workplace as causative factors. It turns out that "almost one third of Muslims of working age have no qualifications, the highest proportion for any faith group."<sup>152</sup> "No qualifications" means "people without any academic, vocational, or professional qualifications."<sup>153</sup> Therefore, a reasonable explanation for the high unemployment and economic inactivity rates may be that there are so many low-skilled, unqualified Muslims in Britain.

Another factor that contributes to the poor economic showing of British Muslims is that many recent Muslim immigrants lack the ability to speak English. Inability to speak the English language in Britain creates an obvious disadvantage in the work place. Language barriers in addition to discrimination could help explain the unemployment and economic inactivity.

Another possibility is that the social system itself is at fault. Clive Crook, senior editor of the Atlantic Monthly, explained this concept. He said that the following factors lead to high unemployment rates of low-skill immigrant workers in Britain and all of Europe: "High mandatory minimum wages, far-reaching 'employment-protection' laws

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<sup>151</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 62-3.

<sup>152</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 14.

<sup>153</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Home Office, *Young Muslims and Extremism*, see last attachment footnote no. 10.

(a misnomer, since they discourage hiring), and generous welfare systems.”<sup>154</sup> Klausen pointed out another factor, i.e., an unwillingness of the British government “to recognize professional qualifications acquired outside of the EU.”<sup>155</sup>

In sum, there are many factors in addition to religious discrimination and racism that contribute to the high unemployment and low levels of economic activity for Muslims in the U.K. However, unemployment, for whatever reason, is highly likely to reinforce, if not create, the alienation of Muslims. Clive Crook was correct when he said, “Jobs alone are not enough to ensure successful assimilation of immigrants, but jobs are a necessary condition.”<sup>156</sup> The statistics on unemployment and economic inactivity do not explain everything, but they are consistent with another factor contributing to alienation, the lower standard of living in the British Muslim community.

### **3. Standard of Living**

Current data shows that Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, who make up 59% of the British Muslim population, have a lower standard of living compared to other British ethnicities, as measured by household incomes, hourly wages, and types of jobs held. Further, British Muslims are less likely than other faith groups to own a home and more likely to live in socially rented housing and overcrowded households.

It is not a foregone conclusion that these data mean that Muslims must be experiencing discrimination. While that may be true, it is also true that Muslims are more likely to be unemployed and economically inactive than other faith groups. Since the unemployed and economically inactive are included in the statistics on household income, they will pull down household income.

Remember from the previous section that Muslim women are less likely to work than the women of other faith groups. “Families with a nonworking spouse are comparably poorer than families with two working spouses.”<sup>157</sup> This may also explain why Muslim household incomes are lower and why they are less likely to own a home. Klausen explained:

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<sup>154</sup> Clive Crook, “The Benefits of Brutality,” *Atlantic Monthly*, May 2006.

<sup>155</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 62.

<sup>156</sup> Crook, “The Benefits of Brutality.”

<sup>157</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 63.

While the statistics show significant variations across racial and religious groups and confirm that Muslims' socioeconomic status lags behind other groups, we cannot clearly distinguish between the effects of discriminatory variables ranging from educational gaps to behavioral patterns, such as the proclivity for early marriage among Muslims.<sup>158</sup>

Clearly, there is a complex set of social and economic variables at work. It still is useful, however, to consider whether community-wide low economic performance leads to individual alienation.

Households headed by a Pakistani or a Bangladeshi person earn less on average than other Britons. More than half of these ethnic minorities are living in low income households (2002-05). Low income is defined as household income less than 60 percent of median income after deducting housing costs. The chart below from the New Policy Institute<sup>159</sup> (NPI) compares household incomes of various ethnicities in the U.K.:

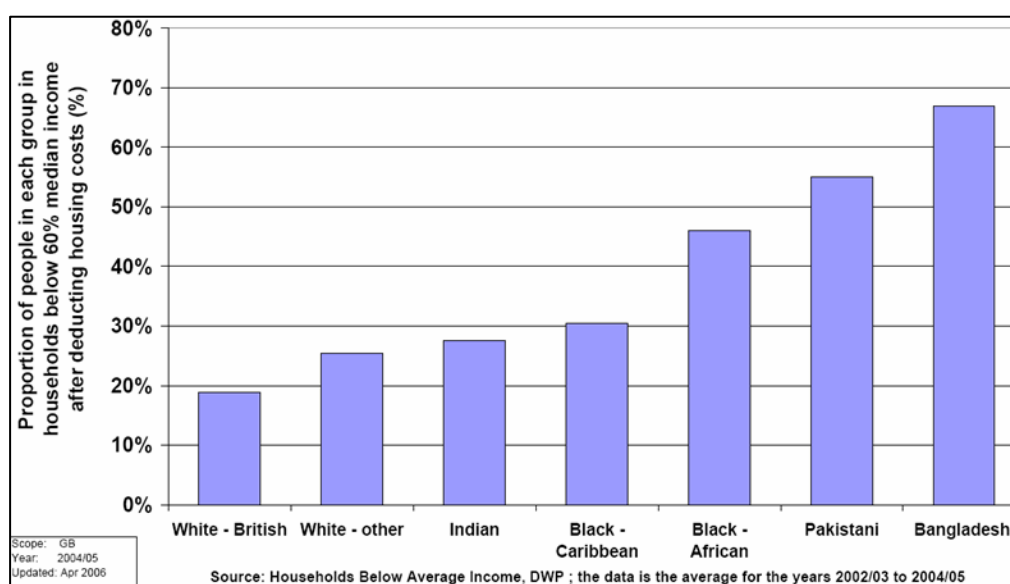


Figure 5. Households Below 60 Percent Median Income<sup>160</sup>

<sup>158</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 63.

<sup>159</sup> New Policy Institute (a British nongovernmental organization) "is a progressive think tank, founded in 1996. [Their] mission is to advance social justice in a market economy." See NPI homepage at <http://www.npi.org.uk/index.htm> (accessed November 2006).

<sup>160</sup> New Policy Institute, "Proportion of People in Each Group in Households Below 60% Median Income After Deducting Housing Costs," April 2006, <http://www.poverty.org.uk/indicators/44.htm> (accessed November 2006).

The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB)<sup>161</sup> reported two other facts related to income that point to disadvantage in the Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslim community. In a 2000 report, for those who are employed, “Bangladeshis and Pakistanis are ... nearly three times more likely to be in low pay than the white population.”<sup>162</sup> Next, in a 2002 report, “Pakistani and Bangladeshi men earn £150 per week less than white men.” Men of other minority groups are doing better: those of Caribbean and African descent earn only £115 and £116 per week less than white men.<sup>163</sup> Figure six below, again from NPI, reinforces these concepts and ideas as they relate to hourly wages. The bottom line is that “a third of Pakistanis and Bangladeshis aged 25 to retirement earn less than £6.50 per hour in 2005/06,” the largest proportion of any faith group in Britain.

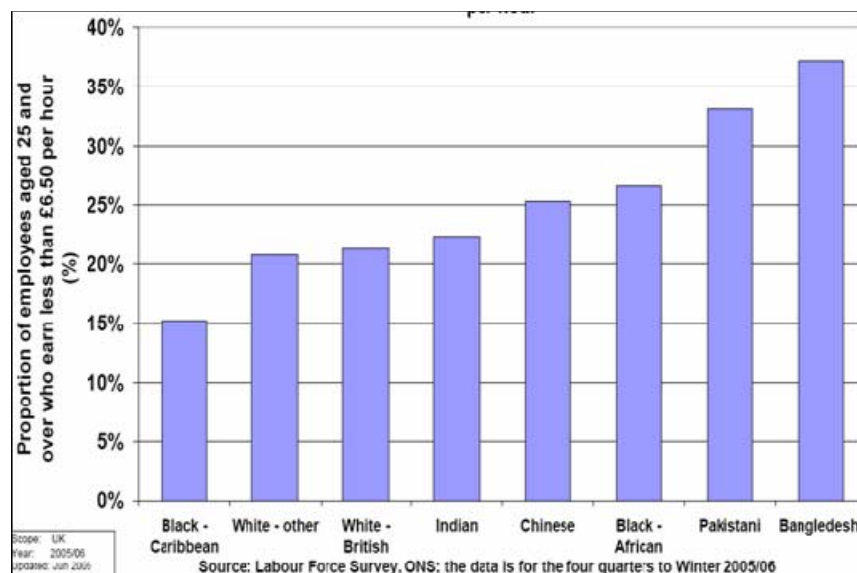


Figure 6. Britons Earning less than £6.50 per Hour<sup>164</sup>

<sup>161</sup> The Muslim Council of Britain is a Muslim organization that serves to improve the quality of life of the British Muslim community. Specifically, its aims and objectives are six: “(1) To promote cooperation, consensus and unity on Muslim affairs in the UK. (2) To encourage and strengthen all existing efforts being made for the benefit of the Muslim community. (3) To work for a more enlightened appreciation of Islam and Muslims in the wider society. (4) To establish a position for the Muslim community within British society that is fair and based on due rights. (5) To work for the eradication of disadvantages and forms of discrimination faced by Muslims. (6) To foster better community relations and work for the good of society as a whole.” Muslim Council of Britain, “Aims and Objectives,” December 2006, <http://www.mcb.org.uk/aim.php> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>162</sup> Muslim Council of Britain, “Muslim Statistics,” December 2006, <http://www.mcb.org.uk/library/statistics.php#6> (accessed December 2006). For that particular statistic the MCB references “National Statistics, Labour Force Survey, Spring 2000.”

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. For that particular statistic the MCB references “Black and Underpaid, study launched at the TUC's Black Workers' Conference, 12 April 2002, Reported on BBC.”

<sup>164</sup> New Policy Institute, “Proportion of Employees Aged 25 and Over Who Earn Less Than £6.50 per Hour,” January 2006, <http://www.poverty.org.uk/indicators/44.htm> (accessed November 2006).

Why are Pakistanis and Bangladeshis earning less? Wages relate to the type of job an individual holds. The BBC reported that “40 per cent of Muslim men in employment were working in the distribution, hotel and restaurant industry, as compared with 17 per cent of Christian men.”<sup>165</sup> Other researchers looked at Pakistanis and Bangladeshis specifically and found that “one in six Pakistani men in employment were cab drivers or chauffeurs, compared with one in 100 White British men ... and two in five Bangladeshi men were either cooks or waiters, compared with one in 100 White British men.” Furthermore, “Muslim men are among the least likely to be in managerial or professional jobs and the most likely to be in low-skilled jobs.”<sup>166</sup>

Another indicator of standard of living is home ownership. The Crown’s National Statistic Office, sourcing 2001 census data, reports that Muslims are the least likely to own a home (see figure seven below).

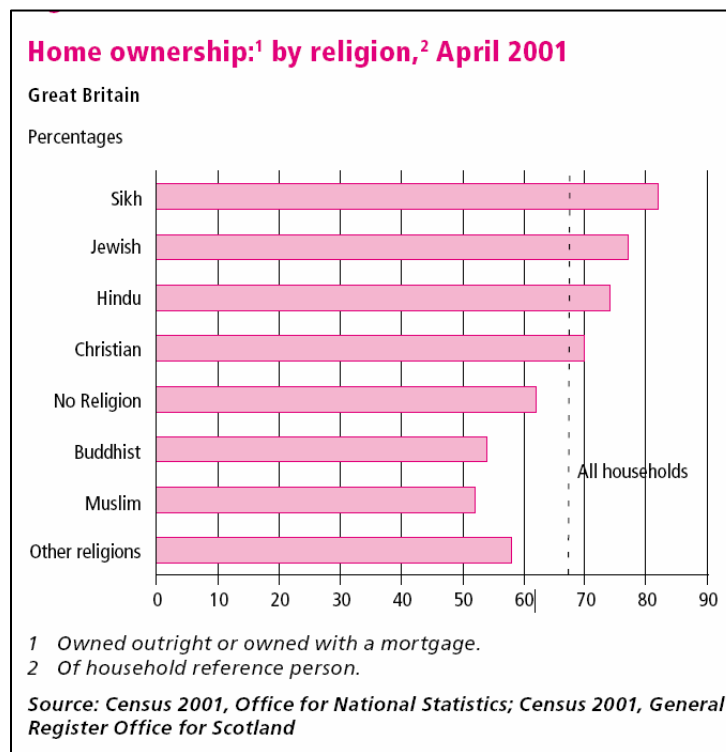


Figure 7. Home Ownership by Religion, 2001<sup>167</sup>

<sup>165</sup> Paul Gallis, coordinator, *Muslims in Europe: Integration Policies in Selected Countries* (RL33166)—CRS Report for Congress (Washington D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 18 November 2005), 16.

<sup>166</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 16.

<sup>167</sup> Joy Dobbs, Hazel Green, and Linda Zealey, eds., *Focus on Ethnicity and Religion* (Hampshire, Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 97.

There are two other issues related to housing. Since Pakistanis and Bangladeshis have lower income levels, it is not surprising that Muslims are also “more likely to live in socially rented housing.”<sup>168</sup> Socially rented housing is a state-sponsored welfare program for families with special financial and/or social needs. Specifically, 28 percent of Muslims live in social rented housing compared to 20 percent of the general population.<sup>169</sup> Second, Muslims are the “most likely faith group to experience [overcrowded] housing conditions.”<sup>170</sup> Thirty-two percent of Muslims live in an overcrowded abode, compared to only six percent of Christian families.<sup>171</sup>

Why are Muslims, and especially Pakistani and Bangladeshi Muslims, earning less and experiencing the housing concerns just addressed? Racism, religious discrimination, and Islamophobia are far from the whole story. When young Muslims see and read about the poor state of affairs of their fellow Muslims, they are further alienated from the Anglo-Christian establishment. The data presented here can reinforce the sense of social injustice held by young Muslims. Zachary Shore, Professor of National Security Affairs at the Naval Postgraduate School, concluded that what the “overwhelming majority of Europe’s Muslims” want is to further a Muslim “interpretation of greater social justice—mainly for workers, women, migrants, and the poor.”<sup>172</sup>

#### **4. Religious Discrimination, Racism, and Islamophobia**

In the previous section, several reasons were discussed why Muslims are underemployed, unemployed, or being paid less than the average Briton. In contrast, a study by the BBC pointed to racism, ethnic stereotyping, or Islamophobia as reasons for the job disparities. In the study, resumes from six different fictitious applicants were sent to 50 private firms. The only differences between the resumes were the names that were

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<sup>168</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 14.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid. “Overcrowding is measured by ‘occupancy rating’. This relates the actual number of rooms to the number of rooms ‘required’ by the members of the household (based on a relationship between them and their ages). A household with a rating of -1 or less can be considered to be overcrowded.” Office for National Statistics, *Focus on Religion*, October 2004, 11, [http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme\\_compendia/for2004/FocusonReligion.pdf](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_compendia/for2004/FocusonReligion.pdf) (accessed November 2006).

<sup>171</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 14.

<sup>172</sup> Shore, *Breeding Bin Laden’s*, 168.

used on the applications. The names used were male and female names that are typically considered white, Muslim, and black names. The white applicants were named Jenny Hughes and John Andrews; the Muslim names were Fatima Khan and Nasser Hanif; and the black names were Abu Olasemi and Yinka Olatunde. The question to be answered was which applicants would be asked to come in for a job interview. White applicants were contacted for interviews almost 25 percent of the time; blacks, 13 percent of the time; and Muslims only nine percent of the time.<sup>173</sup> Religious discrimination or racism seemed to be the primary explanation for the actions taken by the hiring departments of these 50 firms.

Perceptions matter just as much as factual evidence. The perceptions Muslims have is that they are being harassed, discriminated against, and face an increasingly Islamophobic Britain, especially since 9/11. For instance, “One survey by a UK-based Islamic human rights group found that 80% of Muslims polled felt harassed or discriminated against in 2004, compared to 35% in 1999.”<sup>174</sup> In 2004 survey by the Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR)<sup>175</sup>, the findings are similar: “Since 11 September 2001, 80 per cent of Muslim respondents reported being subjected to Islamophobia; ... 68 per cent felt they had been perceived and treated differently; and ... 32 per cent reported being subjected to discrimination at UK airports.”<sup>176</sup> The FAIR survey was designed to gauge only Muslim perceptions since 9/11. Unfortunately, a comparison to the perceptions of other minorities or faith groups post-9/11 cannot be made.

A 2001 report from Britain’s Home Office clearly indicated that Muslims feel discriminated against. The findings of the report were based on 156 meetings, interviews, and discussion with 318 individuals. In addition, questionnaires were mailed

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<sup>173</sup> “‘Shocking’ Racism in Jobs Market,” *BBC News*, 12 July 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/3885213.stm>, (accessed December 2006).

<sup>174</sup> Gallis, *Muslims in Europe*, 18.

<sup>175</sup> The Forum Against Islamophobia and Racism (FAIR) is a British charitable organization whose “aim is to work towards establishing a safe, just and tolerant Britain in which Islamophobia and racism have no place.” See FAIR homepage, <http://www.fairuk.org/intro.htm> (accessed November 2006).

<sup>176</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 18-19.



to 1,830 “religious organisations throughout England,” of which “628 questionnaires were returned.”<sup>177</sup> Highlights of the findings follow.

“Hostility and violence were very real concerns for organisations representing Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus.” To Muslims, discrimination is becoming more prevalent: “The majority of Muslim respondents thought that hostility, verbal abuse and unfair media coverage had become more frequent.”<sup>178</sup> According to the researchers, the main victims of religious discrimination were Muslims.

A consistently higher level of unfair treatment was reported by Muslim organisations than by most other religious groups, both in terms of the proportion of respondents indicating that some unfair treatment was experienced, and by the proportion indicating that these experiences were frequent rather than occasional. The majority of Muslim organisations reported that their members experienced unfair treatment in every aspect of education, employment, housing, law and order, and in all the local government services covered in the questionnaire.<sup>179</sup>

Is the problem racism or religious discrimination? The answer is that they are two sides of the same coin. When a Pakistani is called the disparaging term “Paki,” the motivation could be religious hatred, racial hatred, or both. The Home Office report agreed: “Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus reported the most discrimination overall and research participants who belonged to these minority groups often identified a degree of overlap between religious and racial discrimination.”<sup>180</sup>

Surveys and interviews from the Home Office study led researchers to conclude that education is an area of life where significant discrimination is perceived to exist by respondents.<sup>181</sup> Fear of their children being maltreated because of their religion is a major concern for Muslim parents. They “cite racism and a lack of recognition and support for their children’s faith identities as problems in British community schools.”<sup>182</sup> Because of this, many Muslims would like to send their children to Muslim schools. In

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<sup>177</sup> Paul Weller, Alice Feldman and Kingsley Purdam, *Religious discrimination in England and Wales* (London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, February 2001), v-vi.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., vi-vii.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., vii.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid., viii.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Gallis, *Muslims in Europe*, 17.

Britain there are 7,000 Christian schools that are state-funded, but only five state-funded Muslim schools. The perception the Muslim community has of its government would improve of course if the government would fund more Muslim schools, but politicians must be responsive to their constituent majority and “polls show that almost two-thirds of the general public is opposed to the Blair government’s plan to increase the number of faith schools.”<sup>183</sup>

The findings discussed above parallel the conclusions reached by Klausen in her study of European Muslims. Klausen conducted detailed interviews with over 300 Muslims from six different European countries, one of which was Britain. Three hundred is a reasonable sample size because she estimated there are only 1,500-2,000 individuals in the six countries who meet her criteria of being “an elected or appointed leader in a national or regional civic or political organization, who is of Muslim faith or background.”<sup>184</sup> The number of British civic or political leaders interviewed varied from topic to topic from approximately 25 to 50 individuals. As community leaders and politicians, their opinions were important because they should, in theory, have a good feel for the perceptions of the Muslims in the communities that they represent. The Muslims interviewed by Klausen were people whose job it was to represent the community as a whole.

Klausen’s findings on discrimination are summed up succinctly. She writes, “In Britain, ... the overwhelming perception was that Muslims suffered particular forms of discrimination.”<sup>185</sup> She supported this claim by asking the participants in her study what would be their “first choice of public policy for ethnic and religious minorities” in Britain. The question had five choices plus open-ended choice where the respondents could say something other than what she had listed. 29 of the 31, or 93.5 percent, of the civic/political leaders picked, “unified antidiscrimination law including religion” as their first choice. After providing other evidence she concluded that “discrimination and bias

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<sup>183</sup> Gallis, *Muslims in Europe*, 18.

<sup>184</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 12.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

are seen as the critical obstacles not just to the free exercise of Islam, but also to the ability of Muslims to integrate and advance in society.”<sup>186</sup>

In sum, Muslims perceive racism and discrimination in the schools, in the workplace, and other parts of British society. They believe that Muslims have a lower standard of living, higher unemployment, and greater economic inactivity because of racism, Islamophobia, or religious discrimination. If their perception is correct, then the government needs to improve laws to protect minorities against these forms of discrimination. If the perception is wrong, then the government needs to work with the Muslim community to change those perceptions. In either case, if the government does nothing, it can expect greater alienation of young Muslims.

## **5. Education**

Before discussing the British educational system, it is necessary to mention that the British government gathers data on education by ethnicity alone and not by religious category. Therefore, most conclusions on Muslims and education are based on the statistics on Pakistanis and Bangladeshis.<sup>187</sup>

The media tends to say the outlook with respect to education for Muslims is anything but positive. For instance, the *Hindustan Times* reports, “Muslims are already segregated by lack of education and no opportunities for upward social mobility.” Also, “if education is the key to opportunity and mobility, they [Pakistanis] are certainly behind most people.”<sup>188</sup>

The MCB reports statistics consistent with the headlines. For example, “In 2000, 30% of Pakistani students gained five or more good GCSEs, compared with 50% in the population as a whole.”<sup>189</sup> GCSEs, or General Certificates of Secondary Education, are standardized courses taken by students age 14-16 throughout the U.K. except Scotland. At the end of a two-year study, students are given a grade from “A” to “G” with A (or

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<sup>186</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 63-65.

<sup>187</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 11, 14.

<sup>188</sup> Binay Kumar, “Being British Comes First,” *Hindustan Times* (U.K. Edition), 25 July 2005, [http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/5983\\_1441207,004300140002.htm](http://www.hindustantimes.com/news/5983_1441207,004300140002.htm) (accessed December 2006).

<sup>189</sup> Muslim Council of Britain, “Muslim Statistics,” December 2006, <http://www.mcb.org.uk/library/statistics.php#6> (accessed December 2006). For that particular statistic the MCB references, “The Guardian, June 17, 2002, British Muslim Series.”

actually A\*, which is the same as A+ in America) being the best. A “good” GCSE score is in the A\* - C range and “bad” GCSE score is in the range D - G.<sup>190</sup> The MCB reports that from 1998 to 2000 there have been “impressive gains” in all minority groups’ GCSE scores, except for Bangladeshi pupils, whose scores have actually fallen. Furthermore, Pakistani children have had a “below average rise in performance.”<sup>191</sup>

The chart below shows 2004 GCSE scores compared by ethnic group. Pakistani and Bangladeshi boys are second from the bottom in performance. Only black boys had worse GCSE scores.

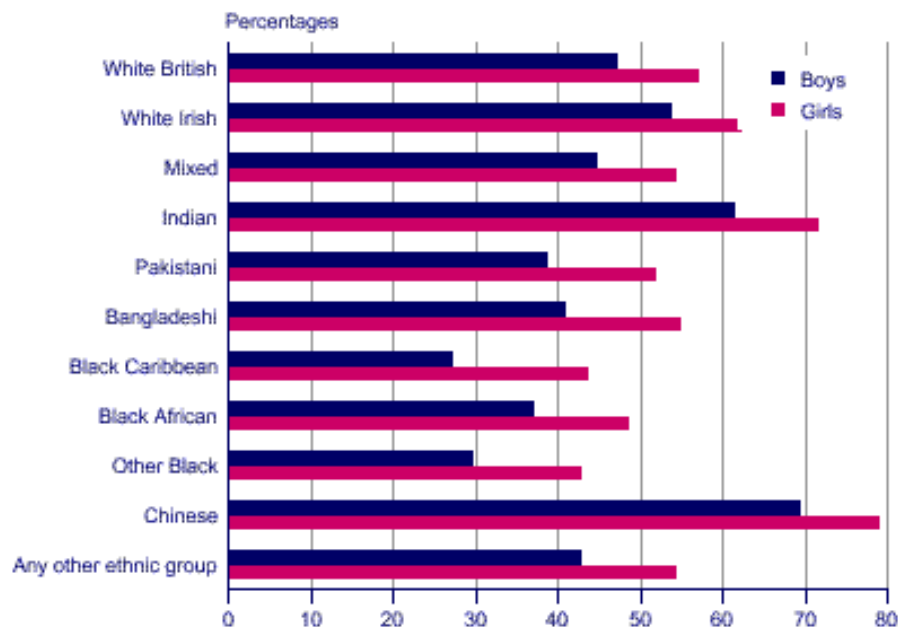


Figure 8. Pupils Achieving Five or more Grades A\*-C at GCSE, 2004<sup>192</sup>

As noted in the section on unemployment above, Muslims have the highest proportion (almost 33 percent) of working age men and women with no job qualifications. The findings summarized in the chart below supports this claim.

<sup>190</sup> Directgov, “Education and Learning,” 2006, [http://www.direct.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained/QualificationsExplainedArticles/fs/en?CONTENT\\_ID=10039024&chk=oxLA2U](http://www.direct.gov.uk/EducationAndLearning/QualificationsExplained/QualificationsExplainedArticles/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=10039024&chk=oxLA2U) (accessed December 2006). Directgov is the “Official United Kingdom government portal and guide to information on central and local services, living in the UK, business resources, public documents, and more.”

<sup>191</sup> Muslim Council of Britain, “Muslim Statistics,” December 2006, <http://www.mcb.org.uk/library/statistics.php#6> (accessed December 2006). For that particular statistic the MCB references, “The National Literacy Trust.”

<sup>192</sup> Office for National Statistics, “Education: Chinese Pupils have Best GCSE Results,” 21 February 2006, <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=461> (accessed December 2006).

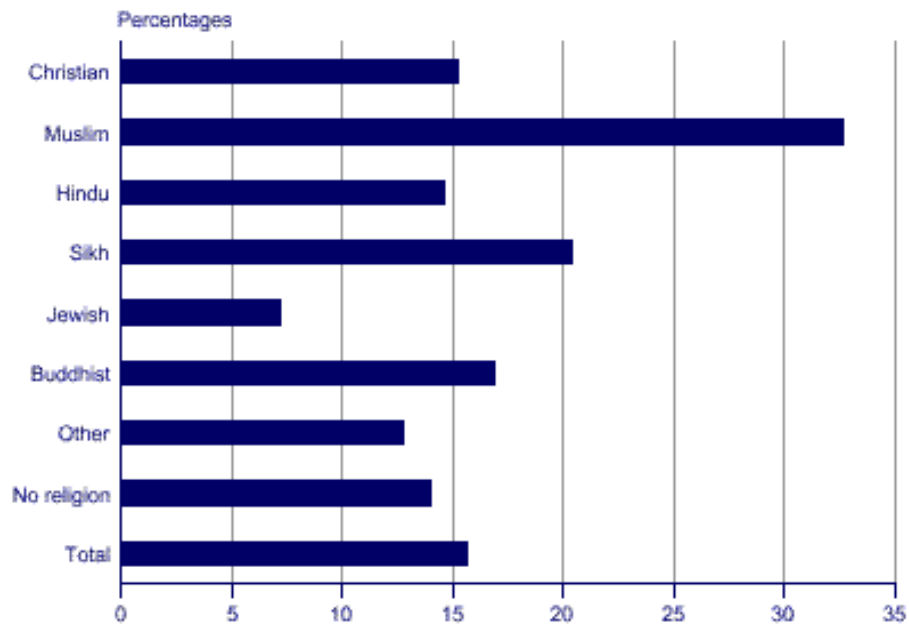


Figure 9. People of Working Age with No Qualifications: by Religion, 2004<sup>193</sup>

Two reasons for the lack of qualifications are: (1) Muslims immigrated to the country without qualifications or education and (2) Muslims are less likely to benefit from the British education system. Poor GCSE scores mean Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and black male students are leaving secondary school less well educated than the rest of British children.

As for the degree of education of immigrants, U.K. National Statistics reports that “Muslims and Sikhs who were born in the U.K. are more likely than those born elsewhere to have a degree or equivalent qualification, irrespective of age. Among those under the age of 30, U.K.-born Sikhs and Muslims were almost twice as likely to have degrees in 2004 as those born elsewhere.”<sup>194</sup> Since only 46% of Muslims were born in Britain, the British educational system is clearly not the sole reason for the high number of unqualified British Muslims; immigrants are arriving to the U.K. without skills.

It remains true that Muslim parents “cite racism and a lack of recognition and support for their children’s faith identities as problems in British community schools.”<sup>195</sup>

<sup>193</sup> Office for National Statistics, “Education: One in Three Muslims have No Qualifications,” 21 February 2006, <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=963&Pos=10&ColRank=2&Rank=288> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>194</sup> Ibid.

<sup>195</sup> Gallis, *Muslims in Europe*, 17.

Thus, in spite of the data that discrimination at school is not the reason for Muslims' poor GCSE scores and lack of qualifications, if a perception of racism persists, then alienation will continue.

## **6. The Police, the Courts, and Anti-terrorism Legislation**

There is considerable evidence that Muslims feel they are being unfairly targeted by the police and the courts under recent anti-terrorism. The perception of discrimination has led to increased alienation in the Muslim community and increased radicalism may follow. Evidence of the effects of the laws and their enforcement comes from the reports by various nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), comments from both Muslim and non-Muslim community leaders, and from statistical data.

The National Council for Civil Liberties, known simply as Liberty, is a nongovernmental agency that “works to promote human right and protect civil liberties” throughout the United Kingdom.<sup>196</sup> In a 2004 report, Liberty, assessed the “impact of anti-terrorism measures on British Muslims,” and concluded as follows:

Police powers have been used disproportionately against the Muslim population in the UK. The majority of arrests have been Muslims. ... The way in which anti-terror powers are being used, has led to feelings of isolation amongst many of the 1.6 million Muslims in the UK. There is disillusionment with a Government which, rather than protecting them from this backlash, is effectively criminalizing them as a community. The group as a whole is stigmatized, and Muslims have often described themselves as felling ‘under siege.’ ... The relationship between British Muslims and the authorities is at an all time low. ... The way in which Muslims are being treated by the authorities ... is making them reluctant to come forward and assists. In addition, the mood of resentment which has developed can foster and encourage extremism amongst a small number of an increasingly marginalized group.<sup>197</sup>

Some of the anti-terror powers Liberty refers to include “police stop and search powers” and “incarceration without trial” for those detainees deemed a threat to society because of their alleged links to or tendencies towards terrorism. In both of these areas,

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<sup>196</sup> Liberty, *Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society—Liberty Response*, August 2004, 2, <http://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/pdfs/policy04/liberty-and-security.pdf> (accessed November 2006). 2004).

<sup>197</sup> Ibid, 8-9.

the Muslim perception is that “British Muslims [are] being unfairly policed” and that the justice system is biased against them.<sup>198</sup>

Human Rights Watch (HRW), another nongovernmental organization, essentially agrees with Liberty. HRW’s mission is to protect “the human rights of people around the world.” In their 2004 report, HRW “has also found that the enforcement of the legislation ‘has harmed race and community relations’ and undermined the willingness of Muslims in the United Kingdom to cooperate with police and security services.”<sup>199</sup>

Specific comments by two community leaders reinforce the NGO findings. Khurshid Ahmed, of the Commission of Racial Equality, in an interview with the BBC in 2004 said,

There is tremendous disquiet within the community. ... It has given license to racist and religious bigots employed within the security services to unleash a form of terror on innocent people up and down the country. ... The community has the responsibility to co-operate with security agencies to ensure our own safety, but the way to get that co-operation is not by terrorising the people and by allowing, without accountability, some within agencies to peddle their race hate among the communities.<sup>200</sup>

Even leaders of the Church of England are speaking out. Regarding anti-terrorism measures, in September 2004, Tom Butler, Bishop of Southwark said, “In recent years stop and search powers have been employed disproportionately against Muslims. ... Confrontational methods of policing are likely to prove counter-productive, as they risk increasing radicalisation of young Muslims in particular.” The net result Butler says is “that Muslim communities experience counter-terrorist policy as discriminatory and threatening is a serious cause for concern.” He maintains that new anti-terrorism “contributes powerfully to a sense of double standards of justice, liberty and dignity between British citizens and others, most of whom are Muslims.”<sup>201</sup>

Because Muslims feel they are targets of the police, it is not surprising that their perception of injustice in British society extends to the courts. “A survey in 1999 by the

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<sup>198</sup> Open Society Institute, *Muslims in the UK*, 20.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>200</sup> Liberty, *Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society*, 12.

<sup>201</sup> Stephen Bates, “Anti-terror measures ‘alienate Muslims’,” *The Guardian*, 21 September 2004, [http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk\\_news/story/0,,1309011,00.html](http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,,1309011,00.html) (accessed November 2006).

Lord Chancellor's Department of all court users showed that ... white people (80%) were the most satisfied with the court, higher than black people (75%) and Asians (Indian 77%, Pakistani 73% and Bangladeshi 66%).” Again, Pakistanis and Bangladeshi's are the least satisfied group. The Lord Chancellor's Department cautions the reader not to draw sweeping conclusions with the Bangladeshi data because their sample size was small.<sup>202</sup>

Have Muslims been targets of the police? The statistics seem to bear out the perception that they have been. Although Muslims make up three percent of the general British population, in 1999 Muslims made up seven percent of the prison populations<sup>203</sup> and in 2001 Muslims were eight percent of the inmates.<sup>204</sup> Looking at police statistics on stop and search incidents, Muslims appear to be over-represented. Between 2000/01 and 2001/02 stop and searches on Asians rose by 41 percent, searches on blacks rose 30 percent, and searches on whites rose only 8 percent. From 2002-03 the number of Asians stopped and searched rose by over 300 percent. “Even the Police have expressed concerns about this rise.”<sup>205</sup>

In sum, in the early years of the twenty-first century, anti-terrorism legislation enforced by the police and the courts has increased feelings of isolation, disillusionment, and resentment in the Muslim community, which can lead to alienation and encourage extremism.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

British Muslims experience high unemployment, high levels of economic inactivity, low income levels, and poor housing conditions, all of which contribute to the problem of alienation. They also have poor GCSE scores and fewer work skills. British Muslims perceive racism, religious discrimination, and Islamophobia in the schools, in the workplace, and in society in general. These conditions and perceptions discourage

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<sup>202</sup> Home Office, *Statistics on Race and the Criminal Justice System* (London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate, 2002), 38, <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/s95race2002.pdf#search='Statistics%20on%20Race%20and%20the%20Criminal%20Justice%20System%20%20Home%20Office'> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>203</sup> Note: “information [was] recorded on [only] about three-quarters of prisoners” in 1999. *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>204</sup> Gallis, *Muslims in Europe*, 11.

<sup>205</sup> Liberty, *Reconciling Security and Liberty in an Open Society*, 10.



many young Muslims from wanting to integrate into British society. Terrorist attacks in Britain pushed legislators to close gaps in anti-terrorism laws. The goal was to protect British citizens from more attacks; but as an unintended consequence, the anti-terrorism laws are further alienating a Muslim community that already has many reasons not to feel welcome in Britain.

Unless changes are made to reduce the alienation of the British Muslim community and foster a cultural pluralism that accepts Muslims as Britons, more young Muslims will reject the possibility of a dual identity that includes being British in favor of a strictly Islamic identity open to extremist ideas. In the globalized society of today, even if Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Mohammad, and Abu Hamza al-Masri are locked up or have fled the country, the alienated can be led down the path of extremism via the internet, by trips abroad, or in a plethora of other creative ways. The solution to Britain's dilemma is not merely to solve the problems identified earlier, but to remedy the alienation at its source. Chapter five investigates potential policy changes that may lessen the six socio-economic sources of alienation and ease the threat of further Islamic terrorist attacks.

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## **IV. BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY**

### **A. THE ARGUMENT**

British foreign policy causes a large minority of British Muslims to deemphasize or, at worst, reject their British identity in favor of a pan-Islamist one. Particularly troublesome is British policy in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Chechnya, Bosnia, Kashmir, and other Muslim lands. For a minority of the British Muslim population, this foreign policy creates an us-versus-them mentality where they choose their Islamic identity and reject their British identity. Even in cases where some admit that a dual identity is possible, their Muslim identity is stronger. This is true because British policy choices directly impact the global Muslim community, known as the *ummah*.

### **B. THE COUNTERARGUMENTS**

Just days after the 7 July 2005 London bombings, Prime Minister Tony Blair vehemently denied any possibility that the attacks were the result of British foreign policy in the Middle East, especially in Iraq. On 11 July, when Blair was asked if “Britain and the United States were all terrorist targets because of their support for the war in Iraq, Blair responded that the attacks were ‘aimed at our way of life, not at any particular government or any particular policy’.”<sup>206</sup> Other members of Parliament backed Blair, including antiwar critic Tony Wright who said “it was ‘dangerous nonsense’ to even suggest that the attacks were in any way connected to Britain’s participation in the war.”<sup>207</sup> The evidentiary support for these claims is that there were terrorist attacks against the West long before the Iraq war. The 11 September 2001 attacks in the U.S. happened before both the Iraq war and the war in Afghanistan. Of course there is more than just 9/11. In another July 2005 interview, Blair pointed out that “Russia had suffered terrorism with the Beslan school massacre despite its opposition to the war, and terrorists were planning further attacks on Spain even after the pro-war government was voted out [after the Madrid bombings].”<sup>208</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Glenn Frankel, “British Politicians Unite Behind Blair,” *Washington Post*, 12 July 2005.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Winnett and Leppard, “Leaked No. 10 Dossier Reveals Al-Qaeda’s British Recruits.”

Over a year later the Prime Minister's tune had not changed. In a 17 October 2006 interview, Blair still "rejected claims that [the presence of British troops in Iraq] fueled Muslim extremism at home and abroad." He went on to add that "it was 'absurd' to say that the military action in Iraq or Afghanistan fueled extremism in Britain."<sup>209</sup>

The same argument is shared by Blair's closest allies like Prime Minister John Howard of Australia and President Bush. Howard, in a joint interview with Tony Blair on 21 July 2005, maintained that Western policy in Iraq is not the reason for the terrorism perpetrated in London. Howard said, "Can I remind you that the murder of 88 Australians in Bali took place before the operation in Iraq."<sup>210</sup>

In September 2006, President Bush agreed with Blair and Howard. In a series of interviews that focused on the leak to the media of the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) titled, "Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States," Bush claimed policy in Iraq does not increase international terrorism. He maintained that "critics who believe the Iraq war has worsened terrorism are naive and mistaken, noting that al-Qaida and other groups have found inspiration to attack for more than a decade."<sup>211</sup> Furthermore, he believed "it is naive and a mistake to think that the war with Iraq has worsened terrorism."<sup>212</sup> His assessment of terrorist motivations dismisses the idea that Iraq is the problem. The President said, "My judgment is, if we weren't in Iraq, they'd find some other excuse, because they have ambitions."<sup>213</sup>

Some terrorist analysts agree with these world leaders that Iraq is not the problem. To Reuel Marc Gerecht, the Iraq war is not the cause for the "ever-expanding waves of holy warriors" hell-bent to destroy Britain and the United States. Gerecht is a resident fellow at the American Enterprise Institute of Public Policy Research and the former

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<sup>209</sup> Lachlan Carmichael, "Blair Denies Claims British Presence in Iraq Fuels Extremism," *Lebanon Wire*, 17 October 2006, <http://www.lebanonwire.com/0610MLN/06101728MAF.asp> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>210</sup> Tony Blair and John Howard, "PM's Statement after London Attacks 21 July 2005," *10 Downing Street* website, 21 July 2005, <http://www.pm.gov.uk/output/Page7969.asp> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>211</sup> Katherine Shrader, "White House Refuses to Release Full NIE," *Associated Press*, 26 September 2006, [http://www.newsvine.com/\\_news/2006/09/27/376996-white-house-refuses-to-release-full-nie](http://www.newsvine.com/_news/2006/09/27/376996-white-house-refuses-to-release-full-nie) 27 Sep 2006 (accessed December 2006).

<sup>212</sup> Barry Schweid, "Bush to Release Part of Intel Assessment," *Associated Press*, 26 Sep 2006 <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory?id=2492720> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>213</sup> Shrader, "White House Refuses to Release Full NIE."

Middle East specialist at the Central Intelligence Agency. He says that anyone who thinks that Iraq is somehow more important than everything else the West has done wrong in the Middle East is gravely mistaken. From “the Danish cartoons lampooning the Prophet Muhammad ... [and] European support for Muslim dictatorships” to sanctions imposed upon Iraq throughout the 1990s and Western culture infiltrating Muslim lands via globalization, it just cannot be that Iraq is somehow more important than everything else as the *raison d'être* for terrorist attacks like the 2005 London bombings.<sup>214</sup>

### C. WHY THE COUNTERARGUMENTS ARE WRONG

Blair, Howard, Bush, and Gerecht are wrong. Support for this argument comes from four sources. First, from the terrorists themselves—7/7 terrorists Mohammad Sidique Khan and Shehzad Tanweer left behind martyrdom videos. Their words explicitly describe their motivations. Second, three top spokesmen for the Muslim community explained what they believe is causing Islamic extremism in the U.K. They are Kamal Helbawy, who helped create both the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB); Sir Iqbal Sacranie, former Secretary General of the MCB; and Inayat Bunglawala, assistant secretary-general of the MCB. These men have their fingers on the pulse of a large portion of the British Muslim community and can legitimately characterize the effect of British foreign policy on Muslim’s opinion of the government. They also have described what they believe are the leading causes for homegrown Islamic extremists targeting civilians in the U.S., the U.K., and Israel. Third, British polls on Muslim opinions related to British foreign policy run counter to Blair’s assertions.

As a final source, the opinions of both governmental and civilian researchers about the cause-effect relationship between British foreign policy and terrorism shed light on the subject. Key findings are disclosed in a “restricted,” Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Home Office dossier titled, “Young Muslims and Extremism.” This restricted report was not intended for public consumption, but was leaked to the media in 2005. This British report meshes well with the American NIE report mentioned above and is

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<sup>214</sup> Reuel Marc Gerecht, “Running from Iraq; Don’t Imagine It will Reduce the Jihadist Threat,” *American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research*, 17 October 2006, [http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.25020,filter.foreign/pub\\_detail.asp](http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.25020,filter.foreign/pub_detail.asp) (accessed November 2006).

worthy of review. Further, in Robert Pape, Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago, in his book, *Dying to Win*, develops a theory on the motivations for suicide terrorism. Since suicide attacks are a now familiar tactic used by British Islamist terrorists, Pape's findings are worth evaluating.

### **1. What the Terrorists Said**

What did 7/7 bombers Mohammad Sidique Khan and Shehzad Tanweer say prior to their suicide attacks in London? The eldest and presumed leader of the group of four, Mohammad Khan, recorded a video explaining why he was going to attack his country:

... I and thousands like me are forsaking everything for what we believe. Our drive and motivation doesn't come from tangible commodities that this world has to offer. Our religion is Islam, obedience to the one true God Allah and following the footsteps of the final prophet messenger. ... Your democratically elected governments continuously perpetuate atrocities against my people all over the world. And your support of them makes you directly responsible, just as I am directly responsible for protecting and avenging my Muslim brothers and sisters. Until we feel security you will be our targets and until you stop the bombing, gassing, imprisonment and torture of my people we will not stop this fight. We are at war and I am a soldier. Now you too will taste the reality of this situation. I myself, ... [pray] to Allah ... to raise me amongst those whom I love like the prophets, the messengers, the martyrs and today's heroes like our beloved Sheikh Osama bin Laden, Dr Ayman al-Zawahri and Abu Musab al-Zarqawi and all the other brothers and sisters that are fighting in the ... (garbled) ... of this cause.<sup>215</sup>

Clearly, although Khan was a citizen of the United Kingdom, he did not identify with the British community. His communal ties were to his "brothers and sisters" in the Muslim world. His nationalist loyalties were to the pan-Islamic nation. He saw world events not through a British lens, but through a Muslim lens. Of course, there are individual differences in the motivations of the four bombers, but due to the close social ties and close interaction between the four men in the months leading up to the events, the general perception is that the group shared the views of their leader, Khan.<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Mohammad Sidique Khan, "The London Suicide Bomber Video," *BBC News* (Real Player audio file), [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/newsid\\_4200000/newsid\\_4207700/bb\\_rm\\_4207792.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/newsid_4200000/newsid_4207700/bb_rm_4207792.stm) (accessed 15 May 2006).

<sup>216</sup> Home Office, *Report of the Official Account of the Bombings in London on 7th July 2005*, 17.

The video shows that Khan was upset about occupation of the Middle East by the West. Other clues to his motivation are contained in a written will and testament that he left behind. Although British authorities have not released that document, the Home Office in their official report on the London bombings pointed out that Khan's written will "draws heavily" on the last will and testament of Suraqah al-Andalusi, a role model of Kahn's who was killed in Afghanistan in 2001.<sup>217</sup> Excerpts from Andalusi's last will and testament logically point to the motivations of Kahn:

If we look around us at the reality of the Muslims we see a regretful state of total humiliation, with very few instances of dignity for the Muslims. The Muslims have generally, as an Ummah, abandoned the teachings of this Deen and Allah (SWT) has left us at the mercy of the forces of disbelief from the Crusaders, the cowardly Jews, arrogant atheists and evil apostates. Nothing embodies this more than the state of affairs in Palestine today. Allah (SWT) has placed this small nation of cowardly Jews over the necks of the Muslims. ... And finally I warn the Muslim brothers and sisters to expel the Jews and Christians, atheists and their puppet apostates from our three occupied Holy sites. The Jews have taken Masjid Al-Aqsa from the Muslims and the impure Americans and their accomplices from the traitorous Ale Saud (Saudi Royal Family) walk the Holy Land. ... So it is upon us to liberate our Holy sites from the terrorist, occupying American forces and to purify Masjid Al-Aqsa from the filth of the Jews.<sup>218</sup>

Obviously, occupation by a foreign power is at the heart of the argument as to why Andalusi, and by association, Khan, believed he must fight the West.

Shehzad Tanweer's martyrdom video aired on al-Jazeera television very close to the one year anniversary of the July 2005 bombings. Tanweer's video points out much more directly than Khan's that British foreign policy in the Middle East was the reason for his suicide mission. Tanweer said,

To the non-Muslims of Britain, you may wonder what you have done to deserve this. You are those who have voted in your government, who in turn have, and still continue to this day, continue to oppress our mothers, children, brothers and sisters, from the east to the west, in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Chechnya. Your government has openly supported the genocide of over 150,000 innocent Muslims in Fallujah. ... You have offered financial and military support to the U.S. and Israel, in the

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<sup>217</sup> Home Office, *Report of the Official Account of the Bombings in London on 7th July 2005*, 19.

<sup>218</sup> Suraqah al-Andalusi, "The Last Will and Final Testament," *Islamic Awakening*, <http://www.as-sahwah.com/viewarticle.php?articleID=713&pageID=235> (accessed December 2006).

massacre of our children in Palestine. You are directly responsible for the problems in Palestine, Afghanistan, and Iraq to this day. You have openly declared war on Islam, and are the forerunners in the crusade against the Muslims. ... What you have witnessed now is only the beginning of a series of attacks, which, *inshallah*, will intensify and continue, until you pull all your troops out of Afghanistan and Iraq, until you stop all financial and military support to the U.S. and Israel, and until you release all Muslim prisoners from Belmarsh, and your other concentration camps. And know that if you fail to comply with this, then know that this war will never stop, and that we are ready to give our lives, one hundred times over, for the cause of Islam. You will never experience peace, until our children in Palestine, our mothers and sisters in Kashmir, and our brothers in Afghanistan and Iraq feel peace.<sup>219</sup>

Presumably the video was assembled by al-Qaeda because recorded video messages by al-Qaeda leaders Ayman Al-Zawahiri and Adam Gadahn<sup>220</sup> were intermixed with the video made by Tanweer. There are no indications that either Khan or Tanweer were coerced into making these videos. Their expressions in the videos and the passion in their words demonstrate that what they say is genuinely what they believed. In the Tanweer video the comments by al-Qaeda members Zawahiri and Gadahn reinforce the words of Tanweer—a top reason for their jihad against the West is retribution for the atrocities committed against Muslims in Muslim lands by the U.S., the U.K., and their allies.

If you take the words of the two suicide bombers and the two top al-Qaeda figureheads at face value, and there is no reason not to, Prime Minister Blair is naïve to think British foreign policy is not fueling Muslim extremism. The only other possibility is that Blair—for guarded political reasons or perhaps to protect his foreign policy agenda—publicly denies the fact that Iraq war is fueling extremism, while privately he realizes the opposite is true.

## **2. What Spokesmen for the British Muslim Community Say**

According to some radicals, British foreign policy in the Middle East is a main source of the contempt held for the British government and for British citizens. British

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<sup>219</sup> “Al-Qaeda Film on the First Anniversary of the London Bombings Features Messages by Bomber Shehzad Tanweer, American Al-Qaeda Member Adam Gadan and Al-Qaeda Leader Ayman Al-Zawahiri,” *Middle East Media Research Institute*, 8 July 2006, <http://www.memritv.org/Transcript.asp?P1=1186> (accessed November 2006).

<sup>220</sup> Adam Gadahn is an American born, now member of al-Qaeda and serves as the organization’s English-language spokesman.



citizens are also to blame, according to the radical Islamists, because they voted for the politicians who are making the foreign policy choices. Is this a point of concern only for the radicals or is British foreign policy also a concern for a larger group of British Muslims? Could foreign policy be a driving factor pushing moderate British Muslims into radicalism?

Kamal Helbawy, Iqbal Sacranie, and Inayat Bunglawala are community leaders in the “moderate” Muslim community. Their viewpoints on the subject of foreign policy are particularly enlightening.

In August 2005, Mahan Abedin, a terrorism analyst at the Jamestown Foundation, interviewed Helbawy.<sup>221</sup> The purpose of the interview was to consider “how to deal with Britain’s Muslim extremists.” When asked about Islamic radicalism in the U.K., Helbawy explained that radicalism is a big problem and the reason for its upsurge in recent years is that “many young Muslims feel alienated by events overseas and by injustices here in the U.K.” By referring to events overseas, he agreed with London Mayor Ken Livingstone that “the events in Afghanistan, Iraq and Palestine” are possible motivating factors for the 7/7 bombers. It should be noted that this interview was conducted prior to the airing of the martyrdom videos discussed above. Specifically, Helbawy said, “If the U.K. had not taken part in the invasion of Iraq and had a more balanced policy toward the issue of Palestine, it is entirely possible that the bombings would not have occurred.” He says that there are likely more radicals out there “who are willing to do this [suicide terrorism] to correct what they see as injustices against Muslims both here at home and abroad.”<sup>222</sup> In sum, Helbawy believes that the

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<sup>221</sup> Helbawy has an impressive resume: “Kamal Helbawy was born in Egypt in 1939 and joined the Muslim Brotherhood at the age of twelve, largely receiving his education in Islam from them. After working in Nigeria, he traveled to Saudi Arabia where he was among the founders of the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY) and became their first executive director. After six years at the Institute of Policy Studies in Pakistan, Helbawy moved to London and helped create the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) and the Muslim Association of Britain (MAB). He was the MAB’s first president and currently serves as an advisor to the organization. Helbawy is also a researcher in Islamic and strategic affairs. He has a history of working in the relief sector and is currently the owner and supervisor of a care home for the elderly in northwest London.” Mahan Abedin, “How to Deal with Britain’s Muslim Extremists? An Interview with Kamal Helbawy,” *Terrorism Monitor* (The Jamestown Foundation), III, no. 7 (5 August 2005), <http://www.jamestown.org/terrorism/news/article.php?search=1&articleid=2369757> (accessed November 2006).

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

government has failed to convince many Muslims that the global war on terror is not a war against Islam.

The Muslim Council of Britain's perspective is similar. Just prior to the 2003 Iraq war, Iqbal Sacranie, then Secretary General of the MCB, authored an open letter to Tony Blair asking the Prime Minister to take "the lead to avert a war against Iraq." Sacranie predicted that an invasion of Iraq would cause lasting damage to U.S. and U.K. relations with the Muslim world. He praised the government's "commendable attempt to reactivate the Middle East peace process" in recent years, but warned that "a war on Iraq would certainly unravel whatever little has been achieved so far. The humiliation and bitterness that would attend a military conquest is likely to provide a natural ground for the growth of bitterness and conflict for generations to come." He said that the British Muslim community was still suffering "from the backlash of the September 11th atrocities" and predicted that community relations and interfaith relations would "deteriorate even further" if Iraq were invaded. He went on to say that British foreign policy was hypocritical and undermined relations with the pan-Muslim community. The government appeared to "implement UN resolutions to our own [British] interpretations." Resolutions aimed at helping the people of Palestine and Kashmir were "ignored", but when it came to Iraq, Britain was "swift to obtain and implement UN resolutions."<sup>223</sup>

Sacranie's argument is supported by more recent statements by Inayat Bunglawala, assistant secretary-general of the MCB. He said that Tony Blair was blind to the truth when he denied "the Iraq factor" as fuel for extremism in the U.K. Bunglawala emphasized that he was not apologizing for terrorism or giving terrorists an excuse for what they have done, but did believe the government "needs to acknowledge that extremist groups have taken advantage of Britain's role in the wars against Afghanistan and Iraq and Washington's longstanding blind support for Israel," if the government wishes to understand what issues are serving as recruiting tools for extremist organizations. Most recently, Blair government estranged many in the British Muslim community when the government refused "to support calls for an immediate ceasefire in

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<sup>223</sup> Iqbal Sacranie, "An Open Letter to Prime Minister Tony Blair" (paper posted at *The Muslim Council of Britain* website, 13 January 2003), <http://www.mcb.org.uk/PM-letter.html> (accessed November 2006).

the [2006] Israel-Lebanon conflict.” In doing this, “Tony Blair appeared to be giving a nod and a wink to the Israelis that they had more time to accomplish their military goals.” To back up these claims, Bunglawala cites poll after poll which have “shown that large majorities in the Muslim world believe that British and American foreign policy is hostile towards them and that the West regards the spilling of Muslim blood as being of little importance.”<sup>224</sup> A review of the polling data will follow in the next section of this chapter.

In summary, from Kamal Helbawy to Iqbal Sacranie to Inayat Bunglawala, these prominent spokesmen for the Muslim community stated that British foreign policy is a critical factor leading to Islamist extremism at home and abroad. They were careful to point out that their claims should not be taken as making excuses for the terrorists, but they simply maintain that if one wants to understand the root causes for extremism, one must realize how important pan-Muslim perceptions of Britain’s foreign policy are.

### **3. What the Muslim Public Says**

This section examines the results of an October 2006 poll that specifically looked at British Muslims’ opinions about British foreign policy and its effects. The poll was conducted by the 1990 Trust. The 1990 Trust is a “human rights and anti-racist charity dealing with issues affecting African, Caribbean and Asian communities.” The aim of the survey was first “to look at how Muslims felt, in particular, about foreign policy, its direction, and the issues surrounding it.” As a second objective, the 1990 Trust pursued this project because it “felt that previous polls and the sensational manner in which some of them were reported have left many serious questions unanswered.”<sup>225</sup>

Data was collected via an on-line survey. The intent was to poll only Muslims. In an effort to do so, the survey “was posted on various Muslim websites: Muslim Directory, Muslim Public Affairs Committee (UK), Q News, and the Islamic Human Rights Commission. The survey was also sent out to the networks of the following organizations: Muslim Council of Britain, Muslim Association of Britain, British Muslim

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<sup>224</sup> Inayat Bunglawala, “It’s Undeniable: British Foreign Policy is Endangering All of Us,” *The Times*, 12 August 2006.

<sup>225</sup> The 1990 Trust, *Muslim Views: Foreign Policy and its Effects*, October 2006, 2, [http://www.blink.org.uk/docs/muslim\\_survey\\_report\\_screen.pdf](http://www.blink.org.uk/docs/muslim_survey_report_screen.pdf) (accessed November 2006).

Initiative, Khoja Shia Ithnaasheri, and Newham Public Affairs Committee.”<sup>226</sup> The total number of respondents was 1,213.<sup>227</sup>

Overall, the findings from the survey support the assertions of the Muslim spokesmen discussed above. For instance, 91 percent of the respondents believe “the ‘War on Terror’ has increased the threat of terrorism in the West.” Researchers compared this to the same question put to the general public (all faith groups) in an August 2006 ICM Poll. In that poll, 72 percent believed “that the UK was now more of a target of terrorist due to its actions in Iraq and Afghanistan.” But it is not just Iraq and Afghanistan. 78 percent of Muslims in the 1990 Trust poll see “the current situation in Palestine a cause for radicalization in the UK.” Respondents in this poll were also permitted to include personal comments in the survey. Some of those comments were documented in the report. An unnamed respondent in the 1990 Trust poll reinforces Sacranie’s argument that the foreign policy of the U.S. and Britain was hypocritical: “Palestine and the treatment of the Palestinian people represents the maximum in Western hypocrisy, bias, injustice and support of corruption and racial discrimination.”<sup>228</sup>

In addition, 89 percent “feel included in the global concept of the Muslim *ummah*.” Because of this feeling, there is concern over recent events in Lebanon: “nearly 63% of respondents felt the recent occurrences in Lebanon were caused by a combination of Israel, the USA and UK.” Researchers pointed out that this again shows that Muslims are alienated by British foreign policy. Surprising and totally opposite to claims made by Bush and Blair, in only a very few British Muslim minds was Hezbollah to blame for the conflict (2.6 percent).<sup>229</sup>

Concern for the people of Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, and Lebanon relates to the strong pan-Islamic identity mentioned throughout this thesis. When asked, “Do you feel included in the global concept of the Muslim ‘Ummah’?” 89 percent said yes. Of those who said yes, 91 percent said “their feelings towards the treatment of the Muslims in

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<sup>226</sup> The 1990 Trust, *Muslim Views*, 6.

<sup>227</sup> Verified via a 20 November 2006 email response from Ruhul Tarafder of the 1990 Trust. His email address: ruhul@blink.org.uk.

<sup>228</sup> The 1990 Trust, *Muslim Views*, 15.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

other parts of the world are affected by this bond.” Surprisingly, many Muslims do not see a conflict with having multiple identities such as being a Muslim and being a British citizen. “92.7% of respondents feel that this loyalty towards ‘*Ummah*’ does not contradict one’s role as a citizen of a nation, able to live and work within one’s society.”

Rhetoric from Bush and Blair does not seem to be convincing Muslims in the U.K. that the war on terror is not a war on Islam. “Over 81% of Muslims questioned believed the war on terror is a war on Islam with only 10% disagreeing.” Perhaps because of this perception, “79.4% think that there has been an increased threat of terrorism in the UK since 9/11.” When asked, “what do you think is the main reason for the increased threat” of terrorism since 9/11, the majority (61.2%) said, “disagreement with Britain’s foreign policy” was the cause.”<sup>230</sup>

Concerning the current debate in the U.S. on whether American troops should stay or withdraw from Iraq, 73.6% of British Muslims “think that if American and British troops were to leave Afghanistan and Iraq, the threat of terrorism in the UK would decrease.” One respondent had an enlightening comment as he predicted the effect of troop withdrawal: “I think the UK [has] too much blood on their hands and as such even if we withdraw I am not sure if the threat would completely go away.”<sup>231</sup>

This is not to say that British Muslims generally condone the actions of a select few radical violent British Islamists. When asked if it is “justifiable to commit acts of terrorism against civilians in the UK,” 96 percent “of respondents said it was unjustifiable” and two percent felt that terrorism against civilians was justifiable.<sup>232</sup> This result is positive in that an overwhelming majority rejects “violence by Muslims;” however, two percent of 1,213 respondents is 24 individuals. Is it a problem that there are 24 people out there who can justify acts of terrorism against civilians? Some would definitely argue yes, because it only took four to perpetrate the July 2005 bombings.

There is quite a difference between who the government calls a terrorist and who the majority of British Muslims in this survey call terrorists. In the eyes of a majority of

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<sup>230</sup> The 1990 Trust, *Muslim Views*, 12.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

British Muslims, their government has missed the mark in that “92.5% of respondents feel that Israel is a terrorist state” and “93% of those polled feel that Bush and Blair are sponsors of state terrorism.” The good news is that British Muslims do seem to separate politicians from their constituents as “only 13% of Muslims polled believe that British Christians should apologise for the actions of Blair in Iraq and Afghanistan.”<sup>233</sup>

While this is only one poll, data presented in the next section—from other polls gauging the same issues—support the overall findings of the 1990 Trust.

#### **4. What the Experts Say**

This section discusses the results of three current studies of terrorism. The first to be considered is a joint Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) dossier entitled “Young Muslims and Extremism.” This report was classified “restricted” by the British government and was not intended for public consumption. The report was originally published in early 2004 and was leaked to the press right after the 7/7 bombings. The full report is now available on-line.

Second is a U.S. government report leaked to the press on the same subject. In September 2006, the New York Times published leaked classified information from a National Intelligence Estimate report entitled “Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States.” Following the leak, President Bush ordered portions of the report declassified for public review. What was released was not as detailed as the British report. It consisted of a mere four pages of text, but it is still useful in that it complements the British findings.

Finally, Robert Pape, author of *Dying to Win*, conducted extensive research on suicide terrorism. His findings on the relationship between foreign occupation and suicide terrorism are solid and insightful.

The problem the authors sought to solve in the leaked British report was “how to prevent British Muslims, especially young Muslims, from becoming attracted to extremist movements and terrorist activity?”<sup>234</sup> The authors recognized that generalizing findings with a “simple cause and effect” formula was impossible. They do, however, try

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<sup>233</sup> The 1990 Trust, *Muslim Views*, 20.

<sup>234</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Home Office, *Young Muslims and Extremism*, 1.

to summarize with caveats. Their answers are organized in three categories: anger, alienation, and activism. The anger is generated by “a perception of ‘double standards’ in British foreign policy, where democracy is preached but oppression of the ‘Ummah’ ... is practiced or tolerated e.g. in Palestine, Iraq, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Chechnya; a consequent sense of helplessness over the situation of Muslims generally; [and] the lack of any real opportunities to vent frustration.”<sup>235</sup>

As causes for alienation, they list difficulties in reconciling an Islamic identity with a British identity; lack of participation in civil society and politics; societal Islamophobia; and a belief that governmental counter-terrorism efforts target their community. As causes of activism, they see that young Muslims are looking for an Islamic identity different than that of their parents or the mainstream Muslim organizations who are seen as having “sold-out.” In their search the youth lack a foundational knowledge of Islam, which leaves them vulnerable to radical interpretations. The youth have a need to belong, and want answers to the problems they face today, but often they find the parental or mainstream interpretations of Islam inadequate.<sup>236</sup>

In the FCO report, the foreign policy concerns of Muslims, and especially young Muslims, are grouped into five areas. First, is the perceived double standard mentioned above—the perception of hypocritical policy choices made by primarily the U.S. and U.K., but also other Western governments and even some Muslim governments. Second, there are “perceived Western biases in Israel’s favour in the Israel/Palestinian conflict.” Third, these perceptions “have become more acute post 9/11.” The perception is that British oppression of Muslims everywhere has changed from passive oppression to active oppression. Passive oppression is exemplified by “non-action on Kashmir and Chechnya,” and active oppression is demonstrated in Iraq and Afghanistan today. Fourth, all this “disillusionment” with British policy makers is compounded with a “sense of helplessness,” whereby, the disillusioned youth “lack any tangible ‘pressure valves’ ... to vent frustrations, anger or dissent.” Fifth, because of disillusionment and helplessness,

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<sup>235</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Home Office, *Young Muslims and Extremism*, 1.

<sup>236</sup> Ibid., 1-2.

and because of their identification with the *ummah*, young Muslims yearn for an Islamic solution.<sup>237</sup>

On the positive side, “the great majority of British Muslims [67 – 85 percent] regarded terrorist attacks on western targets, including the 9/11 attacks, unjustified.” Furthermore, 75-87 percent “felt loyal to Britain,” 67 percent “felt patriotic,” and 62 percent “thought it wrong for British Muslims to fight against allies in Afghanistan.” However, there are significant negative findings. Up to 13 percent “defend terrorism” and as many as 26 percent “did not feel loyal to Britain.” Furthermore, 35-70 percent “thought the war on terrorism was a war on Islam.” Disapproval of Afghanistan versus Iraq was significant as 64-80 percent of those polled disapproved of the Afghan war and a solid 80 percent disapproved of the Iraq war.<sup>238</sup>

In summary, the report found that “many Muslims are unhappy and angry about aspects of ... foreign policy, because they perceive it as biased against or unfair towards Muslims in the world.”<sup>239</sup> In terms of what factor might contribute most to inflaming Muslim extremism, foreign policy “is often the area of government policy which generates the most anger and sense of injustice among Muslims generally, but particularly amongst the younger generation.”<sup>240</sup>

American findings are comparable to the British findings since these are the two Western nations most often accused of carrying out injustice against the global *ummah*. The declassified American report consists of only the “key judgments” of the NIE report and not the full report. The key judgments with regards to the Iraq war are close to the conclusions drawn by the FCO and Home Office. For instance, “the Iraq conflict has become the ‘cause celebre’ for jihadists, breeding a deep resentment of US involvement in the Muslim world and cultivating supporters for the global jihadist movement.” It is important to note that in the eyes of the NIE, a policy of “cut and run” from Iraq is not

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<sup>237</sup> Foreign and Commonwealth Office/Home Office, *Young Muslims and Extremism*, 4-5.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid., 9-10, 26.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 13.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 17.



the solution. If American troops abandon Iraq, this will embolden the jihadists<sup>241</sup> because in their minds they will have once again beaten a superpower. “Once again” because jihadists believe that the righteousness of their Islamic struggle was what led to the defeat of the Soviets in the 1980s Afghanistan war.

Iraq, however, is not the sole reason for the spread of jihad—it is actually one of four reasons according to the NIE:

(1) Entrenched grievances, such as corruption, injustice, and fear of Western domination, leading to anger, humiliation, and a sense of powerlessness; (2) the Iraq “jihad;” (3) the slow pace of real and sustained economic, social, and political reforms in many Muslim majority nations; and (4) pervasive anti-US sentiment among most Muslims—all of which jihadists exploit.<sup>242</sup>

Before closing the NIE discussion, mention of a conclusion reached by the NIE is particularly important for Britain. “The jihadists regard Europe as an important venue for attacking Western interest. Extremist networks inside the extensive Muslim diasporas in Europe facilitate recruitment and staging for urban attacks.”<sup>243</sup> Even though America has its share of Muslim diasporas, for reasons unexplained in this report, Europeans are more at risk than the Americans.

Pape’s book *Dying to Win* presents the views of a private, non-governmental observer. Pape argues that four key factors dramatically increase the likelihood of suicide terrorism being used as a tactic to influence government policy. He suggests that if a government can counter the four key factors, it can dramatically decrease the probability of suicide terrorism being perpetrated against its citizens. Pape’s theory on suicide terrorism can be summarized as follows:

National resistance to foreign occupation, a democratic political system in the occupying power, and a religious difference between the occupied and occupying societies are the main causal factors leading to the rise of suicide terrorist campaigns. ... Modern suicide terrorism is best understood as a strategy used by groups seeking to compel democratic states to withdraw military forces from territory that they consider their

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<sup>241</sup> Office of the Director of National Intelligence, *Declassified Key Judgments of the National Intelligence Estimate “Trends in Global Terrorism: Implications for the United States,”* April 2006, [http://www.dni.gov/press\\_releases/Declassified\\_NIE\\_Key\\_Judgments.pdf](http://www.dni.gov/press_releases/Declassified_NIE_Key_Judgments.pdf) (accessed November 2006).

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

national homelands. ... A difference in the predominant religion of the two societies ... is a main cause for why some foreign occupations by a democratic state escalate to suicide terrorism and others do not.<sup>244</sup>

Pape uses evidence from across the universe of nationalist rebellions since 1980 and from an examination of al-Qaeda. The operative words in his theory are: *nationalism, occupation, against democracies, and religious difference*. By nationalism Pape does not necessarily mean identifying with a particular nation-state. Nationalism in his definition also means appealing to a national identity such as pan-Arab or pan-Muslim.<sup>245</sup> By occupation Pape means not only traditional occupation in the sense of troops on the ground, but also political occupation, i.e., “the exertion of political control over territory by an outside group.”<sup>246</sup> Suicide terrorism is not about ideological differences, or a clash of civilizations, it is really a form of protest against foreign occupation.<sup>247</sup>

Democracies are targeted by suicide terrorists more often than other forms of governments such as autocracies for several reasons. First, democracies are less repressive of terrorists because they protect democratic principles like freedom, liberty, and justice. Because of freedom and liberty, terrorists find it easier to plan attacks in democracies. Further, media coverage of their message is easier to obtain. In a democracy, the public, the audience of the terrorist attacks, is more powerful in influencing the government for change than it would be in a dictatorship. Whether the beliefs held by the terrorists are based in reality is not the point. Rather, these ideas are what terrorists believe about different forms of government and terrorism.<sup>248</sup>

There can be suicide terrorism without religious differences, but overall, “the risk of suicide terrorism is higher when a foreign occupation by a democratic state also involves a religious difference.”<sup>249</sup> “There are powerful prohibitions against suicide in

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<sup>244</sup> Robert A. Pape, *Dying to Win: The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism* (New York: Random House, 2005), 126.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., 95.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., 237.

<sup>248</sup> Professor Michael Freeman, class lecture and discussion of *Dying to Win*, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, 12 Apr 2006.

<sup>249</sup> Pape, *Dying to Win*, 167.

virtually every society,” even in a Muslim society.<sup>250</sup> But dying for one’s faith, martyrdom, changes the prohibition. The community “temporarily suspend[s] the prohibition against voluntary death” if those who die are dying for the sake of the religious community.<sup>251</sup>

It is clear that the 7/7 bombers and a significant minority of other marginalized Muslims identify less with the British community and more with the global *ummah*. Their nationalist tie is to pan-Islam, not to Britain. Viewing the world through this lens, occupation by a foreign power is a key concern in places like Iraq where non-Iraqi, non-Arab, but most importantly non-Muslim soldiers occupy the state. Since Britain is a democratic state and predominantly Christian, all four parts of Pape’s theory are encompassed in the British scene.

In summary, according to Pape, the “root cause of suicide terrorism does not lie in an ideology” (like Islamism, for example).<sup>252</sup> Instead, the root cause of suicide terrorism is actually foreign occupation. The situation in Iraq is critical: “... The longer that American forces remain in Iraq, the greater the threat of the next September 11 from groups who have not targeted us before.”<sup>253</sup> The author says “us” meaning the United States, but his statement applies to the United Kingdom as well, because of its involvement in Iraq. “So long as foreign combat troops remain in the Arabian Peninsula” Britain will be at risk of experiencing another 7/7, another transatlantic airline terror plot, and other acts of terrorism.<sup>254</sup> Potential policy changes and solutions are offered in chapter five.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

There are many reasons to believe that foreign policy choices made by the British government are fueling Muslim anger and heightening Islamic extremism in the U.K. From this standpoint, it is difficult to understand why Prime Minister Blair at least publicly refuses to acknowledge that fact. Lies and hypocrisy can only serve to alienate

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<sup>250</sup> Pape, *Dying to Win*, 83.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, 91-92.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 238.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, 246.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*

more Muslims. While few believe that the U.K. and the U.S. can simply pull out of Afghanistan and Iraq tomorrow, many believe there is much the U.K. government can do in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other parts of the Middle East and South Asia to dissipate the anger the Muslim community feels. Both short-term and long-term solutions are explored in the next chapter.

## V. CONCLUSION

### A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The increase of pan-Islamism in Britain that has sometimes led to violent extremism is caused by a combination of factors: social alienation in the Muslim community, the rise of domestic Islamism fueled by radical religious leaders, and most significantly, dissatisfaction with British foreign policy in Muslim lands. The combination of factors is depicted in the figure below.

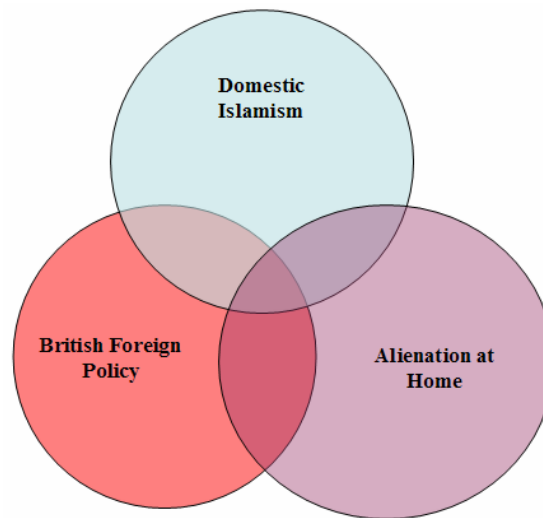


Figure 10. Pan-Islamism in Britain: Causal Factors

#### 1. Domestic Islamism

British laws and traditions allowed men like Abdullah al-Faisal, Omar Bakri Mohammad, and Abu Hamza al-Masri to do and say things that contributed to the radicalization of the 7/7 bombers, the 7/21 bombers, the shoe bomber, the 20th hijacker, and others. Two areas of the law were problematic: laws relating to asylum, immigration, and deportation; and laws protecting freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and other civil liberties. To make matters worse, British authorities knew what many radicals were doing, but chose to look the other way for political, strategic, and other reasons.

In the area of asylum, immigration, and deportation, the U.K. struggled to find a balance between opening its doors to individuals who were persecuted by foreign

governments and closing its doors to those with radical ideas. Years ago, Britain simply opened its doors to everyone. At the same time, a shortage of religious leaders in the Muslim community led to hurried processing of visas to allow imams to immigrate before the government understood the consequences of these actions. Finally, in order to comply with human rights treaties, British officials found it difficult to deport radicals, even after they had committed crimes in Britain or abroad.

In an open and free society there is always a difficult balancing act between freedom and protection. Most nations find that there must be some limits on free speech and religion. The British government was slow to adapt counterterrorism laws aimed at a domestic, Irish-Catholic terrorist threat, to the rising internationally-inspired Islamic jihadist threat.

British authorities tolerated groups and individuals who may have been involved in terrorist activities for two primary reasons. Some evidence suggests that the government was not concerned about Islamist British residents who were only a threat to parties outside of Britain. Because police and intelligence resources were limited, radicals were allowed to go virtually unchecked so long as they were not threatening British citizens. Second, even if British authorities were concerned about the domestic Islamists, there are reasons they did not take action. In some cases their hands were tied by British laws that lacked provisions for prosecuting someone who promoted terrorist activities abroad. In other instances, the principle of “the enemy of my enemy is my friend” applied, as in the case of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group and Britain’s troubled relationship with Qaddafi.

Moderate British Islamists lost out to the radicals in the campaign for the allegiance of some young British Muslims either because their message was less appealing or the youth saw the moderates as sell-outs to British policy makers. In some cases intimidation of the moderates by the radicals may have caused the moderates to withdraw.

Although British authorities eventually put al-Faisal and Abu Hamza in jail, and chased Bakri Mohammad out of the country, these men were not an isolated group. They were only part of a larger problem. Closing the legal loopholes and tightening the

security noose could only do so much to solve the problem of domestic Islamism. While those three notorious men may be gone, there are other jihadist leaders ready to take their places. There are some 100,000 British Muslims who could be categorized as adherents of Islamic fundamentalism. Of these, an estimated 3,000 could be considered a danger to the public. Laws that crack down on the leaders of the domestic Islamists will not change the views of 100,000 sympathizers. To counter the threat that is domestic Islamism, officials have to identify and alleviate the sources of alienation that push young Muslim men towards radical Islamism.

## **2. Sources of Alienation**

The six sources of social injustice identified in chapter three are the prevailing issues that are pushing young Muslims away from mainstream British society and towards radical Islamism. They are: lack of influence in national politics; unemployment and economic inactivity; a lower standard of living; the perception of religious discrimination, racism, and Islamophobia; educational concerns; and the police, the courts, and anti-terrorism legislation. These are problems of utmost importance. It is their alienation that leaves young Muslim men receptive to the radical Islamist leaders. Even with men like al-Faisal in jail, it is likely that other radicals have simply taken their propaganda campaign underground in response to the state's repression of their message.

Even if all the domestic radical leaders were somehow silenced, alienated British Muslims could still be mobilized by a radical al-Qaeda inspired global jihadi ideology from abroad. A domestic void could be filled by travel to meet radicals abroad or proselytizers using the world wide web. Alienated young men can become self-taught jihadists by means of the globalized media such as international satellite television programs, videos, books, audio tapes, and the internet. In an open society like the U.K., the government cannot simply shut off access to radical ideological thought and discussion. Therefore, the sources of the alienation must be addressed.

## **3. British Foreign Policy**

British foreign policy is not just another source of alienation. It is the greatest source of alienation. Despite Prime Minister Blair's public denial that foreign policy is leading to an increase in terrorism at home and abroad, there is overwhelming evidence from a multitude of sources that he is wrong.

The war in Iraq is just the tip of the iceberg. At the base is the perception of one-sided support for Israel, to the detriment of the Palestinians, and this lopsided support has been going on for decades. There are also Muslim concerns that British policy led to the decimation of Muslims in Chechnya, Kashmir, Bosnia, and Kosovo. But it was when British troops actually occupied Muslim lands in Afghanistan and then Iraq, that a significant number of British Muslims reached their breaking point.

The death and destruction caused by the wars in these lands are critical components of an effective advertising campaign developed by the jihadists. The stories and images of atrocities committed by a coalition of American and British troops—the murder of thousands of innocents including women and children—supported the radicals’ argument well and sent a message that resonated with many British Muslims. Radicals tell their new recruits that it is their duty before God to defend the global Muslim community. Terrorism, including suicide bombings, is an effective way to wage war against a physically and technologically superior enemy. Martyrdom brings glory in the afterlife for those who believe. The critical component that leads to a dramatic rise in suicide bombings is the occupation of a peoples’ land by a foreign force.<sup>255</sup> The question now is how to fix the problems.

## **B. MOVING AHEAD: POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS**

### **1. Domestic Islamism**

Muslim extremists were able to exploit Britain’s liberal laws and values and this put the public at risk. Changes were needed. When updating the laws to protect the public, the government must make certain they do not sacrifice liberty in the name of enhanced security. Furthermore, the government must ensure that their efforts do not further alienate the Muslim community.

The first and easiest lesson for the British government to learn was that toleration of radical Islamist activities had to stop. This required a pragmatic shift in government thinking at all levels. The government was forced to recognize that radical Islamism is not only a concern of some far away country, but also a threat to Britons at home. A shift

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<sup>255</sup> Pape, *Dying to Win*, 237.



in mindset was only the first step. The second step was that British laws needed to change in order to fight the threat.

The government closed loopholes in the laws that allowed radical Islamist leaders to encourage terrorism, to disseminate terrorist publications, to incite terrorist acts, etc. This step was the correct response to stop activities that were not intended to be protected under freedom of speech and freedom of religion. Freedom of speech is not a blanket guarantee to say anything. It was obvious that what the extremists were saying was designed to harm non-Muslims and to encourage illegal activities.

But law makers made mistakes. The biggest mistake they made was with Part 4 of the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. Amnesty international summed up the most common objection to this portion of the new law.

Under the ATCSA, non-UK nationals, whose removal or deportation from the UK cannot be effected, can be certified as ‘suspected international terrorists’ by the Secretary of State and immediately detained without charge or trial—that is, interned—for an unspecified and potentially unlimited period of time, principally on the basis of secret evidence.<sup>256</sup>

Those accused of crimes related to terrorism under Part 4 are deprived of due process including the right to a fair trial, the right of presumption of innocence until proven guilty, and the right to legal council. Their freedom is taken away from them “without charge or trail.”<sup>257</sup>

While the intent of the law was to protect the public, there were unintended consequences. Policy makers say freedom, justice, and liberty are core values that must be upheld always; yet under ATCSA, legislators enabled the police and courts to incarcerate terrorist suspects without revealing any of their evidence. Jessica Wolfendale, a full-time Research Fellow at the Centre for Applied Philosophy and Public Ethics, University of Melbourne, Australia, maintains that counterterrorism actions like these do more harm than good. She says,

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<sup>256</sup> Amnesty International, *Submission from Amnesty International*, in House of Lords and House of Commons, *Joint Committee on Human Rights—Eighteenth Report*, 21 July 2004, <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt200304/jtselect/jtrights/158/15810.htm> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

...Terrorism does not pose a threat [to the well being of citizens] sufficient to justify the kinds of counterterrorism legislation currently being enacted. Furthermore, many of the current counterterrorism practices pose a greater threat to individual physical security and well-being than non-state terrorism. We should fear counterterrorism more than we fear terrorism.”<sup>258</sup>

Since all of the eleven individuals detained under this law (as of November 2004) were “devout Muslims,”<sup>259</sup> the perception was that the government had criminalized an entire community based on their faith. A violation of justice in the name of security and protection does more harm than good. Fortunately, the government quickly recognized its untenable stance and repealed Part 4 of the ATCSA.

To avoid further legislative pitfalls a study group of high level Muslim civic and political leaders recommended the following:

The Government must encourage and empower greater Muslim participation in the various reviews of anti-terrorism provisions and implement the recommendations of these reviews in a more transparent manner. The Government must consult widely, and particularly the Muslim community, on any further anti-terrorism provisions. The UK must lead on and not unilaterally derogate from international principles and standards of human rights.<sup>260</sup>

Clearly, the way ahead in the war on terror is to enact legislation that strengthens the police and intelligence agencies, while avoiding laws that assault the very democratic values Britons treasure. Anti-terrorism legislation that seems to unfairly target Muslims actually bolsters support for the radicals’ message.

Michael Freeman, Professor of Defense Analysis at the Naval Postgraduate School, among others, says the “Goldilocks approach” is needed. Police action must not be too tough and not too soft. Instead, the solution must be “just right.” Consider the story of Northern Ireland. With hindsight, most agree that the crackdown in Northern Ireland, 25 years ago, was a one-sided attack on the Irish Catholics by the British police.

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<sup>258</sup> Jessica Wolfendale, “Terrorism, Security, and the Threat of Counterterrorism,” *Studies of Conflict and Terrorism* 29 (2006): 753.

<sup>259</sup> Amnesty International, “Briefing for the Committee against Torture” (briefing presented to the Committee against Torture, November 2004), <http://www.amnestyusa.org/news/document.do?id=38BA3EEE9D70807880256F4D0047ABE2> (accessed December 2006).

<sup>260</sup> Home Office, *Preventing Extremism Together Working Groups*, October 2005, 7, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1502010> (accessed December 2006).

Repression did not halt violence, but instead radicalized more North Irish Catholics, who became hell-bent on countering the British violence with Irish violence inflicted by the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

Regarding reform of immigration, asylum, and deportation laws, the government has accomplished much to fix the problems in those areas as well. Immigration procedures have been tightened up. More resources have been dedicated to enforcing the laws. Procedures have been streamlined to filter legitimate asylum seekers from potential terrorist on the run. The title of “Londonistan” is fading as Britain has increased engagement and bilateral agreements for the extradition of criminals wanted in foreign countries, while still complying with the protocols of the European Convention on Human Rights.

More specifically, procedures have changed on how imams from abroad acquire British visas: “A new requirement is that they demonstrate a command of the English language and an understanding of British society as a condition of renewing a visa.”<sup>261</sup> This is a first step in resolving the problem of foreign imams who are out of touch and unable to communicate with Muslim young people. Efforts are also being made to bolster the number of homegrown imams. More and more programs in Islamic studies and Islamic chaplaincy are being offered at British colleges and universities which supplement imam training at British Islamic seminaries.<sup>262</sup> Domestically trained clerics are better suited to understand the peculiarities of practicing Islam in a Western and predominately Christian society.

Again, care must be taken to ensure changes in laws, procedures, and proceedings are not misconstrued as a one-sided attack on the Muslim minority. British policy makers should not make policy changes in a vacuum. They should engage and consult Muslim community leaders prior to making changes, to avoid community backlash. If the war against terror is perceived as a war against Islam, the jihadists effectively win. The British government is making efforts to prevent this perception.

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<sup>261</sup> Klausen, *The Islamic Challenge*, 115.

<sup>262</sup> Ibid., 114-15.

After the terrorist events in July 2005, the British government called together a working group of many Muslim civic leaders and politicians. The group met for six weeks in August and addressed many of the concerns identified in this paper. On the subject of imams in Britain, an 18 person team led by Lord Nazir Ahmed (politician and serving member of the House Lords),<sup>263</sup> recommended the following:

A new national advisory body/council of mosques and imams. This Body would be inclusive and representative of the many traditions practiced in the UK, independent and lead by the institutions it serves.

The setting up of a National Resource Unit (NRU) for the development of curricula in madrasah/mosques and Islamic centres. The NRU will also develop programmes and guidelines for the teaching of staff that function within these institutions. The programmes and guidelines will be developed with respect and in compliance with the diversity and schools of thought in the Muslim Community overall.

The establishment of a continuous professional development programmes for the ‘upskilling’ of current imams and mosque officials in the UK. Theological training to be provided only by specialist Muslim seminaries, Islamic scholars skilled in training imams in the UK and elsewhere for those seeking to pursue further development.

Design a publication that highlights and promotes good practice from amongst mosques, Islamic centres and imams in the UK.<sup>264</sup>

The British government is on the right track if it continues to consult the Muslim community and incorporate its recommendations into public policy. When they do, they empower the moderates, who hopefully can lead the youth through the pitfalls of finding themselves as Muslims in a non-Muslim country. Changes in the laws take radicals off the streets who are willing to physically intimidate the moderates—as was the case in the story of the Stockwell mosque. Accordingly, changes in the laws should make it more difficult for the advertising campaign of radical jihadists to reach their target audience—alienated Muslim youth. New laws make participation in radical activity less appealing because the costs of activism have gone up—amplified criminal consequences serve as a deterrent. However, the better solution to the headache that is domestic radical

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<sup>263</sup> Working group members were Lord Nazir Ahmed (Convener), Shaykh Ibrahim Mogra (Deputy Convener), Moulana Bilal Miah, Gul Muhammad, Dr Musharraf Hussain, Dr Zaki Badawi, Yathrib Shah, Waqar Azmi, Sir Ghulam Noon, Yousef Al Khoei, Dr Jamal Badawi, Robina Din, Haras Rafiq, Councillor Mohammed Khan, Sameena Khan, Dr Ashraf Makadam, Shaykh Abdul-Hadi, and Shaukat Warraich. Home Office, *Preventing Extremism Together Working Groups*, 72.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid., 63.

extremism is not aspirin in the form of new anti-terrorism laws. The more effective response is to stop the alienation.

## **2. Sources of Alienation**

The first source of alienation to consider is the national political system. Regarding the perception that the government is doing too little to protect the rights of people of religion, the solution seems obvious. The government needs to extend the provisions of equal opportunity and racial equality laws “to cover discrimination on the grounds of faith.”<sup>265</sup> For example, the primary anti-discrimination law is the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000. This piece of legislation is incomplete in that it only protects an individual from discrimination based on race, color, nationality (including citizenship), or ethnic or national origin. Nowhere in the law is religion addressed.<sup>266</sup> Other faith groups have not objected to the gap in this law because their faith is part of their ethnicity, as is the case with the Jews and the Sikhs for example. A Jewish man or woman could challenge discrimination in the workplace by claiming discrimination against their ethnicity. The second problem with this law is that it only offers protection from discrimination in the public sphere and not in the private sector. This idea is supported by the General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, Brendan Barger. Commenting on the BBC study which showed that resumes with Muslim names were the least likely to receive and offer for an interview (detailed in chapter three), he Barger said, “Until the Race Relations Amendment Act is extended to the private sector, [minorities] will continue to be treated unfairly and will be denied the opportunity to succeed at work.”<sup>267</sup> Equal opportunity and racial equality laws must be updated.

To address the xenophobia in politics, the discussion in the previous section applies. The government should engage the Muslim community when searching for solutions.

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<sup>265</sup> Home Office, *Preventing Extremism Together Working Groups*, 36.

<sup>266</sup> Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO), *SCVO Equalities Briefing: The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000*, August 2002, [http://www.scvo.org.uk/equalities/resource\\_base/race/briefing\\_rraa.htm](http://www.scvo.org.uk/equalities/resource_base/race/briefing_rraa.htm) (accessed December 2006).

<sup>267</sup> “‘Shocking’ Racism in Jobs Market,” *BBC News*, 12 July 2004, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/3885213.stm>, (accessed December 2006).

When high unemployment and economic inactivity are considered as sources of alienation and injustice, there are four areas to study. First, the government must protect Muslims from discrimination in the workplace so they can compete fairly with all faith groups for the job opportunities that exist. Second, if unemployment is a result of the large number of unskilled Muslim workers, then perhaps the government needs to re-examine the educational system. Third, for those Muslims immigrating to Britain unskilled, programs to train and educate adult immigrants could help. Fourth, for those immigrating without the ability to speak English, government funding for English classes is money well spent to counter alienation. The expansion of programs like the Learning Skills Council's adult basic skills initiative and programs with the Basic Skills Agency Resource Center could address the latter two problems.<sup>268</sup> The low standard of living of Muslims is of course related to the high level of unemployment. Helping the Muslim workforce would naturally increase their standard of living.

Another potential area for governmental policy initiatives would be programs to inform and educate the female Muslim population. The government must ensure that Muslim women are offered the same opportunities as the rest of British citizens. A study group composed of leading Muslim women was asked by the government to look at issues concerning Muslim women in Britain. The group recommended increasing dialogue and communication between government and Muslim women. This dialogue should advertise and promote the opportunities available and "means of access for women to enter the workplace." The community and the government should build a Muslim Women's "national campaign and coalition" whose goal is to "increase the visibility of Muslim women and empowering them to become informed and active citizens within society." By championing Muslim women who are currently successful outside of the home, this would help to dispel the misperception that "higher levels of civic society are irrelevant, elusive or beyond the reach of Muslim women."<sup>269</sup>

As far as the educational system as a source of alienation, there is racism—or at least the parents' perception of racism—in the schools; and the fact that Muslim children

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<sup>268</sup> For more information, visit their websites: Learning Skills Councils at <http://www.lsc.gov.uk> (accessed November 2006); and Basic Skills Agency Resource Center at <http://www.basic-skills.co.uk/site/page.php?cms=0&p=672> (accessed Nov. 2006).

<sup>269</sup> Home Office, *Preventing Extremism Together Working Groups*, 36-37.

are scoring poorly on their GCSEs. Solutions to these problems in the educational sphere are beyond the scope of this paper, except to say that what the government must strive to do is to ensure a level playing field and create an equal opportunity for all children regardless of faith or ethnicity.

One particular problem worth addressing is the low number of government-funded Muslim faith schools. There are 7,000 Christian faith schools and only five Muslim schools. A good faith effort by the government would be to increase funding for Muslim schools. Xenophobic legislators say that increasing Muslim schools will foster further isolation and worsen problems of integration. They believe that Muslim schools will foster extremism by mirroring Muslim *madrassas* from abroad. Their logic is flawed. What is most important is equality in application of the laws and equal access to government funds for all faiths and ethnicities. Catering to one group and restricting another is simply unfair and only serves to alienate. In addition, these government funded religious schools are not private. Their curriculum follows government approved guidelines so they cannot import and teach some radical program of study from Pakistan or Saudi Arabia. Therefore, xenophobic fears in this area are more likely to be unfounded.

The remaining two sources of alienation are religious discrimination, racism, and Islamophobia; and the police the courts, and anti-terrorism legislation. For the most part, solutions to those problems were discussed above. However, an expanded discussion on the police is worthwhile.

Law enforcement officials could improve their standing in the Muslim community if they would heed the recommendations made by the participants of the April 2006 Anti-Terrorism Laws seminar, held at the University of Birmingham. This group of civic leaders from both U.K. Irish Catholic and Muslim communities, concluded that today the police are out of touch with the Muslim community and are not trusted. The police are seen as outsiders. In order for the community to have confidence in the police, the police must proactively engage, partner with, and otherwise increase their involvement and interaction with the Muslim community. An increase in police transparency would

change the current attitude that the police are targeting the whole community, instead of just the criminals. If these actions are taken, then a sense of justice could be restored.<sup>270</sup>

The social justice that Muslims want is to be offered the same opportunities as the rest of the British population. The government must reduce the perception of injustice if it wants to reduce alienation. There are three general recommendations for addressing the causes of alienation: 1) an expansion of anti-discrimination legislation to protect religion; 2) an effort to show the Muslim community that the police, the courts, and the law makers are there to fight crime and not to attack the entire Muslim community; and 3) the guarantee of equal opportunities for Muslims in the schools, in the workplace, and in British society as a whole.

### **3. British Foreign Policy**

British foreign policy is the key contributing factor to Islamic radicalism in Britain. While it is the most obvious source of alienation, it is, at least in the near term, the most difficult problem to fix. While an entire thesis could be dedicated to the study of British foreign policy in Muslim lands, in short, there are three recommendations. First, in the near-term, Britain must bolster its counter-ideology and counter-advertising campaign against the jihadists. Second, in the long-term, British troops must leave Afghanistan and Iraq. Third, a solution must be found to the Israel/Palestine conflict.

So long as troops must remain in Muslim lands, the British government needs a counter-advertising campaign that will rival the jihadists' propaganda machine. When the jihadists claim that British forces are killing women and children, the British must publicize their version of the story. In addition, the British must report stories of justice and progress. The media is simply too sensationalistic and focused only on the bad news in its reporting on the situation in Iraq and Afghanistan. A more concerted effort is needed to highlight the positive and progress.

The problem with this short-term strategy is that the message may be ignored because of the messenger. Matthew Nilson, U.S. Army Special Forces officer who earned a Master of Arts degree in Defense Analysis from the Naval Postgraduate School,

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<sup>270</sup> Matthew Chebatoris, "Anti-Terrorism Laws: The Experiences of Irish and Muslim Communities in the U.K.," (paper presented as a seminar trip report. Seminar at the European Research Institute, University of Birmingham, U.K., 21 April 2006), 1-3.



points out in his paper “Countering Islamic Fundamentalist Ideology,” that in order “to win the war of ideas,” two things must occur.

First, a counter-indoctrination system must be developed, which is similar in structure and method as that used by Islamic fundamentalist. This counter-structure includes the development or co-option of a series of universities, mosques, and madrassas that preach the counter-ideology. ... Without a counter-structure the effectiveness of message dissemination and internalization will be greatly hindered.

Second, the context of the counter-ideology must be Islamic in nature. Radically replacing an Islamic methodology with a Christian dogma will isolate the population and strengthen the bonds between Muslims and the Islamic fundamentalists thereby reinforcing religious crusade rhetoric.<sup>271</sup>

A withdrawal of British troops from Iraq and Afghanistan should not occur until stability is ensured. Without stability, Afghanistan and Iraq will likely deteriorate into vehemently anti-West states similar to the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan or something worse. Troops cannot leave until stability of the state can be provided by an indigenous government allied with the West. Leaving before stabilization would be disastrous because it would embolden the jihadists as happened when the Soviet military withdrew from Afghanistan in the late 1980s. Every effort must be made to give Iraq and Afghanistan back to their citizens with a stable government, chosen by the people. The government in power cannot be seen as a puppet government of the West.

Ending the occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan is such a high priority because as long as British troops are on the ground and in battle against Muslims, alienation will continue. Pape takes it one step further, estimating that suicide terrorism, like the 7/7 London bombings, will also continue. He claims that the root cause of suicide terrorism is foreign occupation.<sup>272</sup> He believes that “spreading democracy across the Persian Gulf” will not solve the problem of suicide terrorism against the West “so long as foreign combat troops remain in the Arabian Peninsula.”<sup>273</sup> The situation in Iraq is critical: “... The longer that American forces remain in Iraq, the greater the threat of the next

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<sup>271</sup> Matthew T. Nilson, “Countering Islamic Fundamentalist Ideology,” in *2004-2005 Joint Special Operations University/National Defense Industrial Association Essays* (Hurlburt Field, FL: The JSOU Press, 2005), 66-67.

<sup>272</sup> Pape, *Dying to Win*, 238.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

September 11 from groups who have not targeted us before.”<sup>274</sup> The author’s argument is directed at the U.S., but his statement applies to the U.K. as well, since the U.K. is also deeply involved in Iraq. Once Iraq is stabilized, if Western forces must remain in the Middle East because of the West’s Achilles heal, the need for access to foreign oil, Pape believes it is important that foreign troops are not stationed in Muslim lands. He recommends that in order “to preserve access to Persian Gulf oil, ... crucial to the world’s economy,”<sup>275</sup> the American and the British should “off-shore balance” versus stationing troops on the ground. By off-shore balancing he means a withdraw of “all American combat forces from the region ... while working with [Middle East states friendly to the U.S. like Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Bahrain] to ensure that they maintain the critical infrastructure for a rapid return of U.S. forces should that prove necessary” to protect Persian Gulf oil.<sup>276</sup> Off-shore balancing sends “an unmistakable signal that the United States [and Britain are] not in the business of empire, and will thus suck the oxygen out of the atmosphere that breeds anti-American suicide terrorism.”<sup>277</sup> Unfortunately, off-shore balancing is a not a realistic solution in the near-term, because the United Kingdom cannot exit Iraq until stability in the national government is assured.

The third pressing concern in the area of British foreign policy is the urgent need to end one-sided support of Israel to the detriment of the Palestinians. One-sided support in any disagreement usually alienates the other side and its supporters, in this case the global *ummah*. U.N. resolutions need to be supported evenly and the British must ensure that both sides in the conflict comply with international law. Ultimately, there must be a long-term solution acceptable to both the Palestinians and the Israelis. After Iraq and Afghanistan, this is the next most important concern if Britain wants to solve the problem of Muslim alienation and the rise of pan-Islamism in Britain.

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<sup>274</sup> Pape, *Dying to Win*, 246.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid., 247-48.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid., 247.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., 249.

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